A SERMON Vpon the xii. xiij. and xiiij. Verses of the xiiij. Chapter of Ezechiel.

2597
Q. mills

Wherein are chiefly shewed both the originall & accidentall causes of euerie dearth and famine, and especially of this dearth in England now 1608. and 1609. With the effects and Fruites of the same, as also the helpes & remedies therof, if they may be speedily and effectually practised.

Preached at STROWD in the Countie of Glocester and published for the good of the church Militant.

Wherunto is added a like Meditation of the same *Author, vpon the 26. verse of the 11. Chapter of* Salomons Prouerbs, *which may be called the Poore mans Plea.*

By William WOODWALL, *Minister and Preacher of the word.* 1609

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TO
His Christian Bretheren of the Clergie, Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our heauenly Father, by Iesus Christ.

FOr as much as euerie true Minister is the Lords watch-man, and therepon bound by the band of obedience towards God, to blow the Trumpet, and warne the people, when he seeth the sword of the Lord come vppon the land, that is, the Plague of Pestilence, dearth, Famine, War, or any such like: and for that I haue not hitherto seene or heard of anye warning giuen by any brother in publike of this sword of the lord laide vppon this land, by dearth of Corne and other commodities, although I esteemed my selfe the moste vnworthie of all others, yet I could not withholde from the publishing of this little paper-worke, hoping that it might be a motiue vnto those that are better able to take this matter in hand, or at least a discharge vnto my self of that Talent that God hath giuen me, the which mine endeuour if it please Almightie God to blesse, I shall account my trauel wel bestowed. Let that saying therfore of this prophet Ezekiel written in the 33. Ch. ver. 7. & 8, be alwaies before thee, & in thy minde. So thou O sonne of man, I

haue made thee a watch-man vnto the house Israel, Therefore thou shalt heare the word at my mouth, and admonish them from me, when I shall say vnto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt die the death, if thou doost not speake, nor admonish the wicked of his way, that wicked man shall dye for his iniquitie, but his blood will I require at thy hands. *By both which doctrines or lessons of the Lord, we are taught how needfull and necessary a thing it is for the Minister of God to bestir himself both in season and out of season, in the work and word of the* Lord. *A sorry watchman would he be counted of his Captaine, that being set to watch the Citty, would sleep in the night and play in the day, and let the enemy come in which way he would: so careles no doubt are many at this day amongst vs, who being set to watch ouer the house of the* Lord, *let the lords enemies come in and out, which way they list. For could there such crueltie or couetousnes abound as doth, or such dearth and famin encrease as is like to be, if the Trumpet of Gods word were well sounded, and the people of this land duely admonished? no, no, it could not be, but some hearts would be opened: for doth not the* Lord *complaine that his people are destroyed for lack of knowledge?* Hos. 4. 6. *& could they or would they commit such things as are dayly don amongst vs, if they were rightly admonished of the same? Therfore looke vnto it my bretheren, that ye be not found negligent in the worke of the* Lord, *I say, that ye be not hot nor cold, but zealous for the Lords glorie. Giue the* Lord *no rest day nor night, but call vpon him continually, call vpon them likewise that are committed to your charge, that euery man may know his own*

disease,

diſeaſe, and breake off his ſins by repentance, and do the worke of the Lord faithfully, as it becõmeth good diſpoſers of thoſe treaſures committed vnto your truſt, not looking ſo much vnto thoſe things that concerne your own eſtate in this life, as vnto the things of the Lord Ieſus, his flocke, his lambes, his ſheepe, his People, his Church, his kingdome; which grace the Lord grant vs for his Chriſts ſake. Amen.

Thine now and alwaies in the feare of God.

W. W.

A SERMON vpon the 12. 13. and 14. Verſes of the 14. Chapter of EZECHIEL.

THE TEXT.

" 12, *The word of the Lord came vnto me, ſaying:*
" 13. *Sonne of man, When the land ſinneth againſt mee by* " *committing a treſpaſſe, then wil I ſtretch out my hand vppon* " *it, and wil breake the ſtaffe of the bread thereof, and wil ſend* " *famine vpon it.*
" 14. *Though theſe three men* Noah, Daniel *and* Iob " *were among them, they ſhold deliuer but their owne ſoules by* " *their righteouſneſſe, ſaith the Lord.*

THE word of the Lord *came vnto me, ſaying:* Out of this whole text, do ariſe three principall or eſpeciall points right neceſſary of vs to be cõſidered, both in regard of our owne inſtruction and admonition, as alſo in reſpect of the time preſent; it beeing a time of dearth and ſcarſitie, and hunger amongſt vs, as that was a time of trouble amongſt the Iſraelites, when

when the Prophet *Ezechiel* vttered theſe wordes vnto them, ſo that this text or partell of Scripture, as *Salomon* ſaith, *Of the word ſpoken in his place or ſeaſon: Which is like apples of gold with pictures of ſiluer*, meaning, that as the one is pleaſant to the eye to beholde and looke vppon, ſo the other is or ought to be as pleaſant and delectable to the eare, heart, and minde of man to cõſider of, & ponder vpon, or like vnto the emplaiſter or potiõ, that is rightly imploied of the learned and skilfull phiſition, and expert chirurgian, to the party diſeaſed or member affected. For as we ſay, to come in time is the chiefeſt thing of al, ſo to ſpeak in time, that is, aptly & to the purpoſe, is a point very commendable and no leſſe profitable. The principall points or parts heerein to be handled, are theſe: Firſt, what is both the originall and accidental cauſe of dearth or famine, declared in the 13. verſe, & firſt part thereof. Secondly what be the effects and fruits thereof, laide down in the latter part of that v. Thirdly what be the helps & remedies of euery ſuch dearth, plague, or iudgement of God, which are ſhewed & ſet down in the 15. v. But before I can cõueniently come to entreat of theſe 3. I muſt giue you a taſte of ſome other maters, ſuch as by the way of a preparatiõ vnto the reſt are deſcribed by this prophet, in the 12. v. as namely what he meaneth by ſaying, *The word of the lord came vnto me*, the maner how it came, from whome and vnto whome; for like as euery Embaſſador heere on earth, which is ſent from one Prince or Potentate to another, vpon any embaſſie or meſſage, doth vpõ his or their firſt arriuall vnto the perſon to whome

they

they are ſent, make knowne both who ſent him, and wherefore, as well for the further credit of his meſſage, as for the better acceptation of himſelfe; euen ſo doth this man of god the prophet *Ezechiel* in this place (being called of God to deliuer his word vnto the children of Iſrael) as it is to be ſeene more at large in the 1.2.3.ch. of this propheſie; doth in theſe words make knowne vnto them, not onely what he was to ſay vnto them, or what Embaſſage he was to deliuer, but alſo who had ſent him, and whoſe Embaſſador hee was, as out of the words of this text may be gathered. *The word of the Lord came vnto me,* Becauſe euerie word of this text is verye pathetical, I wil intreat of them *verbatim* (as they ſay) as they come in order. And firſt, wheras he entituleth his meſſage by the title or name of (the word of the Lord) it giueth vs to vnderſtand of ſome neceſſarie points to be conſidered of, as namely, and firſt of al, what the word of the Lord is, & what he meaneth thereby in this place: Secondly what the dignitie or excellencie thereof is: Thirdly what is the vtilitie: and laſt of all the neceſſitie.

Concerning the firſt point what it is, being conſidered in the whole, it is reuerenced with many titles, as the Lambes booke: the Librarie of the holy Ghoſt: fountaines of Iſrael, waters of life: the two edged ſword, *Vrim* and *Thumim*. So it being conſidered in part, is called the power of God vnto ſaluation, to euerie one that beleeueth. But what the Prophet meaneth in this place by it, you muſt vnderſtand, that he meaneth no other thing but onely an holy Leſſon, counſell, Doctrine or admonition, *Rom.* 1.16.

or elſe an earneſt and ſharpe commination and dreadefull denunciation of Gods iudgement (ſuch as is contained in theſe words which I haue reade vnto you) inſpired or taught of God himſelfe, that is, by his holy ſpirit, for their inſtruction, admonition, or amendment, to whome it was then ſent, as likewiſe vnto vs, & the church militant, to whom it ſhold at any time hereafter be preached. And this is both the meaning and ſignification of it in this place. Now concerning the dignitie or excellencie therof, although there can be no greater a praiſe or commendation be giuen thereof, then that which you haue alredy heard. *Ro.* 1. 16. &c. Yet becauſe the word it ſelfe is pregnant in this point, it ſhall not be teadious vnto me to giue ſome taſt therof. Worthie therefore is that to be called to minde that the Prophet DAVID hath left recorded in Pſ. 19. ver. 7. 8. &c. ſaying: *The law of the Lord is perfect conuerting the ſoule; the teſtimonie of the* Lord *is ſure, and giueth wiſdom vnto the ſimple: the ſtatutes of the* Lord *are right and reioice the heart: the Commaundements of the* Lord *are true and righteous altogether, more to be deſired then golde, yea then much fine golde: ſweeter then honye and the hony combe, yea dearer vnto me then thouſands of gold and ſiluer*. All which is ſpoken of the word of the Lord, either in generall or particular, or in both, that men might make good vſe thereof, and giue good regard thereunto, when it is ſent or preached vnto them. A common fault amongſt manye at this day, which eſteeme of it no better then of a tale of Robinhood, or as this Prophet ſheweth of the people in his time, Ch. 33. ve. 31. 32. who eſteemed ther-

of

of, none otherwise then of a song of one that hath a pleasant voice to sing wel, for the vtilitie or profit thereof. The Apostle Saint PAVL will tell vs, that the whole Scripture is giuen by inspiration of God and is profitable to teach, to conuince, to correct, and to instruct in righteousnes, that the man of god may be absolute and perfect vnto all good workes. 2. Tim. 3. ver. 16. 17. And Saint IAMES will say that it is able to saue our soules if it bee receiued with meekenes. 1. IAM. 1. 21. And for the necessitie thereof, let that be remembred which Salomon hath left recorded; namely, that where the word of the Lord is not preached, there the people perish, *but he that keepeth the law shall be blessed*, Pro. 29. 18. These things being thus laide down, doe giue vs to vnderstand not onelye what it is that heere the Prophet hath to say, but also who this Lord is, whose word is so powerfull, precious & profitable: for althogh he is heere but barelye named Lord, without anye further addition of this Title or declaration of his Maiestie; yet this his word heere mentioned (if we will search it well) will teach vs and tell vs, that it is euen that Lord of Lords, and King of Kinges, that onely hath immortallitie, and dwelleth in light that none can attaine vnto, whome neuer man sawe nor can see, vnto whome bee honour & power euerlasting. Amen. Euen the God of Gods, the Lord who hath spoken and called the earth from the rising vp of the Sunne, vnto the going downe thereof. The Lord of hoasts who buildeth his sphears in the heauen, and hath laide the foundation of his Globe of elements in the earth. He calleth the waters of the Sea, and powreth them out vpon the earth.

Reu. 17. 14
1. Time. 6. 16
Psa. 50. 1.
Amos. 9. 6

The Lord is his name (*Came vnto me*) How, and after what manner this word or meſſage of the Lord came vnto the prophet EZECHIEL, not only himſelfe ſheweth moſte plainely, Chap. 1. verſe 3. and 29. Whereas he teſtifieth that the hand of the Lord was vpon him: that is, the ſpirit of Propheſie, and that he heard a voice of one that ſpake to him: But alſo the Authour to the *Hebrewes*, Chap. 1. verſe. 1. 2 teacheth that the Almightie God at ſundrie times and in diuers maners, ſpake in olde time to our fathers the Prophets, as in the firſt age to the Patriarkes by himſelfe perſonally; as to ABRAHAM, MOSES, &c. So afterwards to the Prophets ESAY, IEREMIE, EZECHIEL and the reſt, by dreames, viſions, and inſpirations. But in the fulneſſe of time (which the Apoſtle calles the laſt daies,) hath hee ſpoken to vs by his Sonne, whome hee hath made heyre of all things, like as in theſe our daies (which are the laſt daies indeed) he doth ſpeake vnto vs, the holy miniſters of his word, as vnto your ſelues by vs, by his holy and diuine ſpirit, according as the Prophet IOEL fore-tolde. Cha. 2. 28. ſaying: *And after thoſe daies I will poure out of my ſpirit vpon all fleſh, & your Sonnes and your Daughters ſhall propheſie, and your olde men ſhall dreame dreames, and your yong men ſhall ſee viſions.* Agreeable, whereunto our Sauiour in the goſpel ſaith, Mat. 23. 34. *Behold I ſend vnto you prophets and wiſemen, and Scribes &c.* And againe, *it is not you that ſpeake but the ſpirit of your heauenly father that ſpeaketh in you.* Mat. 10 20. From whence commeth this obſeruation, that our moſte gratious God in all ages hath had ſuch a care in building vp his Church, that he hath vouchſafed to ſpeake vnto the ſame, &

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to ſend forth labourers into his vineyard from time to time, that like as in the beginning & creation of all things, he ſaid *Let there be light, & there was light, let there be a firmament, &c.* I ſay, as in the creation of the materiall frame and ſubſtance of this externall and viſible world, God made al things by his word, (for he ſpake the word and they were made) Pſ. 148. 5. So in the new regeneration & building vp of the New Ireuſalem, he ſendeth forth his word, that is, he ſpeaketh by his ſpirit in the heartes & mindes of his holy Miniſters, that they ſhould ſpeake vnto the congregation that which he enioyneth them.

The ſecond obſeruation is, that in asmuch as, it is not ſimply we that ſpeake vnto you, but the ſpirit of our heauenly father that ſpeaketh in vs) whereupon the Prophet ſaith: *The word of the Lord came vnto me*) that you yeelde ſuch attention to the word ſpoken by vs, as vnto the word of the eternal & liuing God, as Chriſt himſelfe teacheth, ſaying: *He that heareth you heareth me, &c.* Mat. 10. and that eſpeciallye becauſe we are vnto you, as this prophet was vnto the people of Israel, the Embaſſadors or Legates of the Lord, as Saint Paul plainely prooueth, ſaying: *Now then are we Embaſſadors of the Lord, as though God did beſeech you through vs, wee pray you in his ſteede that you would bee reconciled vnto God, for hee that made him to be ſinne for vs, which knew no ſinne, that we might be the righteous of God through him.* 2. Cor. 5. verſe 20 21. And therfore to conclude of this point, I ſay, let him that hath an eare heare what the ſpirit ſpeaketh vnto the congregation.

Thirdly, by this we may obſerue and learne how farre foorth the Almightie God (whome the hea-

uen of heauens cannot hold or conteine) doth conforme himselfe, to our weakenes, vouchsafing to speake to vs, & to talk with vs familiarly, according to our capacities, whose voice otherwise is so mighty & so strong, that it is compared to the thunderclaps which breaketh the Cedars of Libanus, renteth the Rockes, and maketh the Mountaines to cleaue in sunder. This the *Israelites* make plaine, who when they had heard the Lord speake vnto *Moses*, and saw the thunder and the lightning, they desired that *Moses* might speake vnto them, affirming that if God spake vnto them they should dye, Exo. 20. 19. so terrible is the voice of the immortal creator to the mortall creature. And yet notwithstanding for our instruction, admonition, & amendment, he vouchsafeth to speake vnto man, sometimes sencibly, & sometimes secretly euen in his eare, as our Sauiour sheweth, *Mat.* 10. 27. saying *What soeuer you shall heare in the eare that is what soeuer I shall priuately by my selfe, or secretly by my spirit instill into your eares, hearts or mindes* (for thus doth the word of the Lord come vnto vs at this day) I meane the knowledge & intelligence of his word, euen when we are lying in our beds, walking on the way, looking on our bookes, or otherwise sequestred from the affaires of this world, in reading, preaching, meditating, or conferring, Then I say, are our hearts ascending vp to God, and his spirit discending downe to vs, as the Angels on *Iacobs* ladder, for euen as the naturall mans delight is in those things wherein his corrupted nature taketh pleasure, And as the worldely minded mans

thoughts,

thoughts, do runne vpon his monies and his markets, his buyings, buildings, bargaines, brablings, profits, pleasures, or any such like vanities:

Euen so are the spirituall mans cogitations, totally and continually exercised, and meditating in the lawe of the Lord, and in the misteries of godlines, as the Prophet *Dauid* manifesteth, in the first ps.v. 3. where he shewing how the godly man bestoweth his talent, saith *That his delight is in the lawe of the lord, and in that law doth exercise himselfe both day and night.* Or if at any time he doth stoope so low, as to associate or busie himselfe with the affaires of this worlde, as to eat, drinke, talke, walke, laugh, buy, sell, or recreate himselfe with any the creatures (for that cause subdued vnto vanitie, it is none otherwise, then as the Apostle S. *Paul* saith, 1. *Co.* 7. 31. *Vsing this world* that is this pleasure, or that profit, *as though he vsed it not*, for why? his hart is stablished in the Lord, and his principle ioy is in the holy ghost, I would say in the law of the Lord or word of God, *vnto me*, that is to me *Ezechiel* the strength of the Lord (for so my name dooth signifie)

As if he would say, though I be of my selfe a weak, poore, simple, & sinfull soule, yet by his grace I am such a one as it hath pleased him to make choise of for the ministery of his word (for such is his maner to chuse) as S. Paul sheweth, 1, Cor. 1. 27. 28. saiing, *But God hath chosen the fooliſh thinges of this world to confound the thinges which are mightie, and vnnoble thinges of the World, and thinges which*

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are despised hath God chosen: yea, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are. So I by the Lord, (though small in the sight of man) am now called vnto this holy function, to be the Lords Embassador: or thus, whereas by my naturall Parents and birth, I was the childe of death, sinne and corruption, (for I was defiled in the wombe and euer since) but now sanctified by the Spirit of sanctification, & begottē of the immortal seed of Gods word, & enabled to the ministery therof by my heauenly father, both Name & Nature is changed, and by his grace *I am that I am*, (saying:) If anye demaunde whether this speech vnto the prophet was sencible or secret, it is not much materiall whether either; for that God vseth to speake both waies vnto his Seruants, as before is prooued; but seemeth in this place rather to be audible then intellectuall, as appeareth in the first Chapter, verse 29. where as he saith, hee heard a voice of one that spake (*Sonne of man*) as if he would say, Thou which art but earth and ashes, though I vouchsafe to speake to thee in familiar maner, & to manifest my glorie to thee, as in chap. 1. verse 3. 4. 5. & 6. &c. Yet be not thou proud thereof, as some of thy fellowes before thee haue bene, (for knowledge puffeth vp) but rather goe and doe thy message that I shal enioine thee: & be not as Ionas, who being sent to *Niniuie* went to *Tharsis*: neither as Adam, who beeing charged not to taste of the tree of knowledge of good and euill, tasted of the forbidden fruite: Neither as that man of God mentioned in the first booke of Kinges, Cap. 13. ver. 1. 2. &c. that came out of *Iuda*, and prophesied a-

gainst

againſt the Alter that *Ieroboam* had ſet vp. Who beeing charged by the word of the Lord, not to eate breade nor drinke water, nor to turne again the ſame way that he came; who though he denyed the King, requeſting him ſo to doe, yet afterward yeelded vnto the olde Prophet, and was deſtroyed of a Lyon for his labour. Whoſe example I counſell thee *Ezechiel* to marke, that thou doe not the like, leaſt I deſtroy thee before them, as I deſtroied him before thee: for thou art of no better ſubſtãce nor ſtrength thẽ he was, or the reſt before named; nor more able to withſtand or reſiſt mee then they were. Remember therefore that I tell thee before hand, what thou art, and who. Euen the Sonne of a ſinfull man; whether thou haue reſpect vnto *Adam* thy firſt parent, or to bnzie thine immediate parent (which ſignifieth contempt) thou art but an earthen veſſell full of contempt, more ready to diſobey then to obey my commandement, therfore take heed. A Caueat to all the ſeruants of God how great ſoeuer their guiftes bee, that they ſhewe not themſelues careles of their calling, nor forgetfull of their maiſters buſines, as Chriſt himſelfe aduertiſeth, ſaying: *VVhoſoeuer ſhall put his hand to this plowe* (meaning the miniſterie and preaching of the word) *and looke back*, that is, by any kinde of negligence, or diſobedience, *is not fit for the Kingdome of heauen.*

This I take partly to be the reaſon of this Title (*Sonne of man*) attributed vnto the Prophet *Ezechiel*, & as a pulback, to the end he ſhold not be too much exalted with the multitude of viſions & Reuelatiõs,

(ſuch as were ſhewed vnto him at his firſt calling) as in the firſt chapter are to be ſeene. Like as Saint *Paul* recordeth, how in the like caſe, *There was giuen vnto him the meſſenger of Sathan to buffet him*, 2. Cor. 12.7. From whence we learne, that before a man can be apt for the kingdome of heauen, I mean capable of deuine miſteries, he muſt be throughly mortified & ſchooled in Gods ſchoole-houſe, that is, in the furnace of ſome affliction or great deiection; ſo as we ſee in S. *Paul*, at his conuerſion, how he was caſt downe to the ground, and ſtrucke blinde for three daies, &c. Act. 9. 4. &c. The like we read of *Eſay*, whoſe mouth was touched with a fire coale taken from the Alter: that is, ſanctified and regenerated by Gods ſpirit, before his iniquitie could be taken away, and his ſins purged, that he might be worthy to goe on the Lords buſines: which is or may be an aduertiſement vnto all ſuch as ſeeke to enter into the miniſtery, before they finde or feele in themſelues any ſufficient guift to diſcharge the ſame, As alſo an item to thoſe of ſuperiour place, that they admit not any into any paſtorall place or cure, that are not qualified thereunto. All which is & may be comprehended & included vnder this title of *Son of man*: which title I alſo finde atributed to Ieſus Chr. as in *Mat.* 24. v. 30. & 37. 44. to declare his humanity, as in this place to this prophet, to teach him his infirmitie: It followes, *When the Land ſinneth againſt me*, By land, heere you muſt vnderſtand the people, for the land or earth ſinneth not, how beit, it was once curſed for ſinne. A figuratiue ſpeech very vſuall in the Prophets & word of God, as we

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read in *Eſay*, Chap. 11. v. 9. & 4, where it is ſayde *Repleta eſt terra ſcientia domini*, that is, *The earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord.* And againe, *He ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth*: where he nameth the earth, yet meaneth the people: and rod, yet meaneth the word. And ſo heere, whereas he ſaith land, it being figuratiue, giueth vs to vnderſtand, that there is more meant, then if he had ſimply ſaide, the people: for it implieth not only that one ſort or part of the people, as the higher powers onely, or the middle part ſhould ſo ſinne againſt the Lord, but euen all: as if he ſhould ſay, both king, & ſubiect, prieſt and people, poore and rich, young and olde, all which are but earth duſt and aſhes, the works of my hands, as the veſſels of clay in the hands of the potter, *The land* q. d. The land that I haue long time tilled and ſowne with the beſt ſeed, the land that I haue alwaies loued: or thus, the people that I haue created in mine own Image, deliuered from the hands of their enemies, fed with the fineſt flower of wheat, preſerued and kept as the apple of mine eye, &c. yet ſee how grieuouſly they haue ſinned againſt me, and prouoked me to wrath, in ſuch wiſe that I am ready to breake their ſtaffe of bread, therefore (*Againſt me*) like as it is ſaide, *Mat.* 12. 30. *He that is not with me, is againſt me, and prouoketh me to puniſh him*: ſo contrary is ſinne vnto God, that he holdeth him to be his enemy (as it were) that committeth any ſinne.

And would not any of vs be loath to haue his Maieſtie, our ſoueraigne (I meane the king of England) to be his enemie? we ſee by common experience,

if a man purchase but the il wil of a Iustice of peace in his countrie, or of some other superior person, how it is requited againe one time or other. But to prouoke the Lord of Hoastes against him (who is a consuming fire) who can but looke for a requitall at his hands, who saith: and that of right: *Reuenge is mine, and I will repay*, and of whome it is also saide, *It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the Lord*, As we may see by example, how seuere he hath shewed himselfe euen towards his moste deere children, *Adam*, *Dauid*, *Paul* & others: for can any of thē say but as they sinned against him, so he punished thē for it euen to the eating of a peece of an Apple: as *Saul* would haue sometime done to *Ionathan* for tasting a little hony, and yet good Lord what sinnes are here committed amongst vs on euerie side against the Lord, not in the singuler number as the prophet noteth saying (*A trespas*) but in the plural number, euen to Milions and multitudes: it followes *Then will I stretch out my hand vpon it.* q.d. or declare and shewe foorth my power, my Iustice, my iudgement, and my wrath.

Two manner of waies may it bee saide that the Lord God Almightie dooth stretch foorth his hand, that is to say, eyither to saue or to destroy, as in the 136. Psalme, verse 12. where it is said, *that hee brought out Israell from amongst them*, (meaning the Egiptians) *with a mightie hand and stretched out arme.* So in the Prophet *Hose.* 11. Chap: 3. vers. *I led Ephraim also as one should beare him in his armes: but they knew not that I healed them.* As *Dauid* againe likewise saith. Ps. 77. verse 15. *Thou hast redeemed thy peo-*

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ple with thine arme, euen the Sonnes of IACOB and IOSEPH.

As ſince that time, how hath the Lord ſtretched out his arme for vs, and for our deliuerance, *Anno* 1588. when the great inuaſion was pretended by the Spaniſh Nauie. And againe, ſince that 1605. when the Gun-powder treaſon was prepared for to haue made hauocke of vs all? The Lord lifted vp his mightie and ſtretched out arme for our defence and ſuccour, *Oſanna* his holye name haue the praiſe for it.

Now as for the defence and preſeruation of his people, the Lord ſtretcheth out his arme, when they walke in his waies, and turne to him by repentance. So likewiſe when he intendeth to correct or puniſh his people for their Rebellions againſt him, he is ſaide to ſtretch out his hand, as we read in *Iob.* when Sathan ſaide to God concerning Iob. *Stretch out thyne hand, and touch all that hee hath, &c.* q.d. *puniſh and plague him. &c.* Likewiſe in *Ieremy* the 15. Chap. verſe 6. We reade thus. *Thou haſt forſaken me ſaith the Lord and gone backward* (meaning the Iewes) *therfore wil I ſtretch out my hand againſt thee, and deſtroy thee, for I am wearie of repenting.* (*Vppon it*) By theſe words we learn, that whether they are taken literally or figuratiuely, that both the earth it ſelfe, and the people which dwell on the earth, and are earthlye minded, are in the hand of the Lord, & ſubiect vnto his correction, for as he correcteth the one by famine, dearth, Peſtilence, Warre, &c. So hee ſmiteth the other and the fruites thereof with blaſting, drought, Mildew, Caterpillers and ſuch like.

So that to whether of either he ſtretcheth out his hand, they muſt indure and ſuffer it, which may teach vs in due time to fly vnto the lord for ſuccour, helpe and fauour, eſpecially when wee ſee his hand ſtretched fourth both towards the one & the other. For not onely our ſtaffe of bread is broken, whereby many of the poorer ſort of people are plagued, but alſo the earth it ſelfe is ſmitten, wherby in many places her fruites & encreaſe haue failed, it cannot be denyed. (*And I will breake the ſtaffe of bread thereof*) q. d. I will puniſh the people of that place with dearth and ſcarſitie of corne, and with hunger and famine. Theſe words are partly figuratiue as the former, & therfore the more deeply to be conſidered. For many waies is the lord ſaid to break the ſtaffe of bread, acording as I finde in his holy writ, as now I wil declare vnto you, to the end that you may perfectlye vnderſtand the meaning of theſe wordes; and the will of the Lord contained in them.

Three maner of waies doe I finde that theſe words may conueniently be taken: as firſt, when the Lord doth diminiſh or abate the fruites of the earth, as of Wheate, Barly, Rye, &c. and ſo bring in a dearth & famine amongſt the people, as he foretelleth by *Moſes*, ſaying, *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with a conſumption, and with the Feauer, and with a burning Ague, and with feruent heate, and with the ſword, and with blaſting & myldew, &c.* This alſo he fore-ſheweh by *Ezechiel* to come vpon the Iewes in their Captiuitie, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt alſo take vnto thee Wheat, & Barly, and beanes, and Lintell and Millet and Vetches, and put them in a veſſel, and make thee bread thereof, according to the number*

of

of the daies, that thou shalt sleep vppon thy side, &c. And in the 16. verse of the same Chapter, he saith; *I will breake the staffe of bread in Ierusalem, and they shall eate bread by weight, and drinke water by measure, and with astonishment*: meaning through the rarity & scarsenes of Corn, & this is the first way of breaking the Staffe of bread. And after the which way or maner, the Lord hath broken our staffe of bread in some measure in this Land, by causing the earth to faile of her encrease of some sort of graine, as Wheate especially.

The second way or meane, whereby the staffe of breade is broken, is, when though there bee Corne sufficient in the land, (as yet is) notwithstanding the earth failing her encrease, (through the charitable assistance of some other Nations) yet the price therof is so enhaunsed and raised vp through the couetousnes and cruelty of the Corn-breeders, buyers and sellers, Conueyers and Corn-mongers, that the poore are not able to compasse it. And though they do for a time hold out by selling and pawning all that they haue, yet at the last they can hold out no longer, but miserably die of the dearth and famine.

Of this kinde of breaking the staffe of bread, the Prophet Amos maketh mention. Chap. 8 verse. 4. 5. saying: *Heare this, O ye that swallowe vp the poore, and make the needie of the land to faile*, saying: *When will the new Moone be gone, that we may sell Corne? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheate, and make the Ephah small, and the shekell great, and falsifie the weights by deceit?* As wee haue many amongst vs at this day, that spie out their oportunities to raise their

their prices, as both at ſowing time, full tide, & the latter end of the yere.

By this means it may be alſo truly ſaid, that the lord hath broaken our ſtaffe of bread, for though heere be corne and graine ſufficient in the land (as I haue prooued) yet the price is inhaunſed ſo high, that the poore cānot attain to it: for how can they when their earnings amount not to aboue foure or fiue ſhillings a weeke for a man, hee hauing ſeauen or eight perſons depending vpon him to bee releeued with the ſame: as for example, I know many poore Miniſters, yea, and ſome of them ſufficient preachers, who hauing but ten poundes a yeare ſtipend to liue on, who are charged as I haue ſaid, whoſe maintenance will not ſuffice to finde him and his breade onelie, after the rate and price that Corne is now come vnto, a pittifull caſe: conſider O King, & let all ſuch hard-hearted Corne-ſellers and conſumers of their bretheren, that either by hardneſſe of heart, couetouſneſſe, or crueltie, tranſportation or conueying away of Corne from their natiue countrie and neighbours (now in time of dearth & ſcarſitie eſpecially) to Aliens, Pyrates, or other nations, and ſee and ſuffer their poore Bretheren and Siſters at home to lye in the Streets, and at their doores, and complaine, and pine and periſh.

Let thē I ſay conſider what the Lord of hoſts ſaith vnto them, verily thus: The Lord hath ſworne by the excellency of *Iacob* and ſaide: *ſurely I will not forget any of their workes*. And againe, ſhall not the land tremble for this, and euery one mourne therein? *Amos*. 8. verſe. 4. 5. As if he ſhould ſay to them here-

after

after, as *Abraham* once ſaid to *Diues*. *Sonne remember that thou in thy life time liuedſt in pleaſure, and Lazarus in paine, now he is comforted and thou art tormented.* The third and laſt way whereby the Lord is ſaid to break the Staffe of bread, is when the Lord giueth the fruits of the earth in aboundance, and habilitie ſufficient to prouide them, in ſomuch that many eat and drinke thereof continually, and yet notwithſtanding, they are alwaies empty, hungry and not ſatiſfied. And al becauſe God hath not bleſſed it vnto them, neither they ſhewed themſelues thankfull vnto him therefore: for how many of this ſorte of people may a man finde at this day amongſt vs, that ſit downe and eat and drink and fill themſelues from day to day, and riſe vp againe, neuer thanking the lord for his benefits. This point the prophet *Oſe* toucheth, Chap. 4. 10. ſaying, *For they ſhall eat and not haue enough, they ſhal commit adultery and ſhall not encreaſe, and all becauſe they haue left off to take heed vnto the Lord*: as if he would ſay, to be thankful vnto the Lord for his benefits. Agreeable thereunto the Prophet *Hagge*. Chap. 1. 6. ſaith alſo; *Ye haue ſowen much and bring in little, ye eat but ye haue not inough, ye drink but ye are not filled, ye clothyou, but ye are not warm, ye earn much, but ye put it in a bottomles bag*: like vnto thoſe that haue the dropſie, who are euer drinking, & are euer dry; or as the couetous, who are alwaies catching, and neuer ſatiſfied nor content, and all becauſe the Lord doth not bleſſe it vnto them, not conſidering that the bleſſing of God, maketh rich and bringeth no ſorrowes with it, Pro. 10, 22. It is wonderful to conſider (if many had grace ſo to do)

how much the bleſſing of God, auaileth in this caſe: For to ſpeake vpon mine owne experience heerein; I haue ſeene where the creatures of God haue bene receiued without reuerence, and giuing of thankes; that as much hath bene weekely donoured in bread onely of two perſons, as where they haue ben taken with ſobriety and thankfulnes, hath ſufficed eight other perſons, yea and thoſe eight in better liking and ſtate, then the other two.

As we read of *Daniel* and his fellowes, who feeding on pulſe, and drinking water, were in better liking then thoſe that had the kings portiõ. I ſpeak it I ſay vppon perfect knowledge and experience. Of which ſort of people, the Poet *Iuuenall* maketh mention, to haue bene in his time, of whome he writeth thus, *Nos numerus ſumus, fruges conſumere nati*, meaning, that there were a number borne (as it ſeemed) to no other end but onely to eat, and drink and die. Of whome the Apoſtle ſaint *Paul* maketh mention, ſaying, *For many walke of whome I haue tolde you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the croſſe of Chriſt, whoſe end is damnation, whoſe belly is their God, whoſe glory is their ſhame, which minde earthly thinges, &c.*

From whence it may appeare, that when the Lord breaketh the ſtaffe of bread, bleſſeth not the labour: where thankſgiuing is not vſed, neither ſobrietie practiſed nor regarded, there is both hunger and famine continually.

Which may ſerue for an Item, to all Epicures, Atheiſts, and ſwaggerers, that neither think on God re-

receiuing his benefits, nor thanke him for them being receiued.

But me thinkes I heare it demaunded, wherefore doth the Lord vſe ſuch darke and figuratiue ſpeeches in deliuering his meſſage vnto his people? partly for the deepe ſenſe and manifold vſes thereof to be made, and partly as our ſaniour ſaith, *Mat.* 13.13. *To you it is giuen to know the miſteries of the kingdome of God*, That is, to the prudent, ſtudious, and louers of wiſedome: for as the greateſt treaſures are commonly found in the deepeſt mines, and the ſweeteſt kirnell within the hardeſt ſhell: ſo the darker ſpeech, the deeper ſenſe, and the harder words, the higher miſtery: As may appeere by that which heere enſueth.

For like as a ſtaffe is a ſtrength & ſtay vnto an old, lame, & impotent perſon in his gate, if it be whole and ſound; or as a man that hath a iorney to goe, taketh a ſtaffe in his hand, aſwell for defence (if any danger hap) as alſo for other neceſſary vſes; which if it be crackt or broken, ſtandeth in no ſteed, but if it be whole, it auaileth much:

So bread is vnto the body of man a neceſſary ſupply, to ſupport him in the affaires of this life, ſo long as he can haue it: but if it hap to be ſcanted or with-holden from him, he cānot longindure: Both which may teach vs theſe good dueties, Firſt, dayly and dilligently to aske it at the hands of God by prayer, as alſo to returne vnto him due ſacrifice, of praiſe and thankſgiuing therefore: In both which reſpects, no doubt but there are many very negligent and remiſſe.

But howſoeuer, or whenſoeuer it is broken or diminiſhed, we ſee by this, that is heere ſaide, that our ſinnes are the cauſe of it: but for what ſinne or ſinnes? there is the queſtion: for ſome thinke it is for pride, and ſo it may well ſeeme, for was there euer ſuch flaunting in faſhions, or coſt in coloures? ſuch laſing and faſing, cuts or conceites, as are now a-daies vſed of many, who neuer ſtint cutting of whole cloth into iags and rags, and all for a little paltry pride, and filthy faſhion, moſt contrary vnto Chriſt his coat, which had no ſeame? which although in miſtery doth teach an other thing; yet in plaine words ſhould teach vs to make our garments ſomewhat decent, modeſt, and chriſtian-like. Some againe thinke that couetouſnes is the cauſe thereof; aswell it may be ſuppoſed: for was there euer ſuch leaſe-monging, copie catching or running for reuerſions, as is now a daies? for if a man haue but a life or two in his liuing (if it be any thing better then his yearely rent) he ſhal be ſure to haue it taken ouer his head, if he beſtirre not himſelfe the better: or if he haue 20. or 30. yeares to come in his leaſe, except he make the better haſte, he is like to come too ſhort of a further eſtate: yea though the yeres current and vnexpired be not like to be ended before the worlde be ended. Some againe thinke whoredome to be the cauſe of this dearth, which indeede ſo ouerfloweth the land as *Noes* flood did ſometime the world.

Some impute it vnto vſury and extortion, for neuer was there ſuch vſury I ſuppoſe, for heere is vſe vpon vſe, that is, vſe for the vſe, beſide vſe for the prin-

principall, notwithmanding that the Prophet *Dauid* hath ſaid. *Lord who ſhall dwell in thy Tabernacle, or reſt in thy holy hill? Euen he that hath not giuen his mony to vſury, nor taketh reward againſt the innocent.* Pſ. 15. 1. 5. And as for extortion I ſay no more, but let all thoſe that take fees in offices or for office, take heed there of.

Others thinke that drunkennes is the cauſe that our Staffe of bread is broken; ſome ſay ſwearing, for neuer was there more of either. Thus *Quot homines tot ſententiæ* (as they ſay) ſo many men, ſo many mindes. But if I might enterpoſe my Iudgement among the reſt, cõcerning the very efficient, & operatiue cauſe indeed of this breaking the Staffe of bread amongſt vs; I would ſay with *Salomon*, *In quo quis peccat, in eo punietur*, that is, wherin a man offendeth or ſinneth, therein or thereafter, he ſhalbe puniſhed. Sap. 11. 13. whereunto *Moſes* aſtipulateth, ſaying: *Pro menſura peccati, erit plaga*, that is, according to the meaſure of the treſpas, or hurt, the puniſhment ſhall be. Deu. 25. 2. Now, if the equitie both of deuine and humane lawes be ſuch, that wherein a man ſinneth or treſpaſſeth, therin or thereafter, he ſhalbe puniſhed; then although the leaſt of thoſe ſinnes before recited, haue deſerued to haue our Staffe of bread broken: yet more properly to define thereof, I may ſay, that as the Lord hath three manner of waies broken our ſtaffe of bread, ſo there may be gathered three ſpeciall cauſes, more iuſtly procuring the ſame then the reſt.

Like as we read that the ſinnes of *Sodome* and

Gomore, were pride, fulnes of bread, that is, gluttony and drunkennes, aboundance of idlenes, and not ſtrengthning the hand of the poore; yet when we rightly conſider of their puniſhment, we ſhall finde that as they burned in vnlawfull luſt one towards an other, ſo were they burned and conſumed with fire and brimſtone from heauen: like as our late Arch-traytors, that intended to blow vp others with Gunne-pouder, were ſome of them ſtroke downe with the ſame, and others ſo ſcorched, that they carried it to their graues, So righteous is God in all his waies, and holy in all his workes.

Thus in like manner may we ſuppoſe, that of this threefold breaking our ſtaffe of bread, there may be gathered three capitall crimes, or principall cauſes aboue the reſt. As firſt, our great contempt of the heauenly *Manna*, and ſweete foode of our ſoules; our diſobedience to the word of God, I meane, ſo plentifully and purely preached amongſt vs. And this dooth DAVID moſt plainely prooue in the pſ. 81. verſe 13. whereas he ſaith: *O that my people would haue hearkened vnto me*, That is, vnto my word preached amongſt them; *and Iſraell had walked in my waies!* Marke the anſwere, verſe 16. *Then would I haue fed them with the fat of wheat, and with hony, out of the rocke would I haue ſufficed thee.* As if he would haue ſaide, becauſe ye haue not hearkened to my word, nor obeyed the ſame, I haue ſcanted your bread and broken the ſtaffe thereof. But heere haply you will ſay, of what manner of perſons is the word of God ſo deſpiſed, as you ſpeake of? Firſt, of the Recuſant Papiſts, that will not heare it

read

read nor preached, except it be of a Maſſe prieſt, and that in the latine tongue. Secondly, of the Preciſian, that cares not to heare it read in the church at all, nor preached, except it be of ſuch a miniſter as doth refuſe ſubſcription. Yea but thoſe are eſteemed and taken for the moſt zealous profeſſours of al: They would indeed be ſo accounted, but I finde by experience, that they haue done more harme in the Church, thē euer the Recuſant papiſts did, that would not come to church at all. For heereby the miniſtery is reproached, the word deſpiſed, and the people ſo deſtracted, that wheras before they were very attentiue to the word read and preached, and duely reſorted to their ſeuerall pariſhes; now they runne ſome one way and ſome another, as it were ſo many ſheep without a Shepheard, not ſuffering wholeſome doctrine, but hauing their eares itching, do after their owne luſts, get them an heape of teachers, euen as S. *Paul* long ſince propheſied, 2. *Tim.* 4. verſe 3.

The third and laſt ſort of them that contemne the word, are thoſe, old and cold proteſtants that do vſually and daily come and ſit before the miniſter & heare but how? none otherwiſe then thoſe Iſralites of whome the Prophet *Ezechiel* maketh mention, ſaying, *For they come to thee, as the people vſe to come, & my people ſit before thee, and heare thy words, but they will not doe them, for with their mouthes they make ieſtes, and their heart goeth after their couetouſnes: and loe, thou art vnto them as a ieſting ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voyce, and can ſing well, for they heard thy words, but they do them not.*

And

And thus is the word of God contemned in a manner of all, or at the leaſt of the greateſt part of the people amongſt vs.

The ſecond cauſe of this our ſtaffe of breade broken, is, (as I take it) the corrupting or abuſing of thoſe good creatures of Wheate and Barlye, which God ſo plentifully hath heretofore powred downe vpon vs, as for many yeares paſt they haue bin. But happily you wil ſay, wherin or how haue we abuſed thē? Behold, & I wil ſhew you: Firſt, of wheat, wherwith the Lord hath made as a ſure promiſe to feede vs with the fineſt Flower therof: haue not we turned it from the right vſe thereof, in filling our bellyes, vnto the fineing of our necks, bychāging it from making of bread into making of ſtarch? a moſt vile and abhominable abuſe, when you ſhall haue in ſome one little town in this Land as much wheat weekly ſpent in making of Starch as in making of bread: and as for the other graine of Barlie, who knowes not how many waies it is, and hath bin miſpent of many: ſome feeding their Hogs, ſome their Dogs and Horſes therewith, where as Chriſt himſelfe was content to feede himſelfe therewith, & feaſted many thouſands. Others conuerting it into mault in ſuch exceſſiue manner and meaſure, as paſſeth to ſpeake of, & then tranſporting it who knowes whether? that both the price is enhaunſed therby as you ſee, & drūkennes dayly maintained: for what is it to haue an hundred buſhels of Mault brewed in one little Towne euerie weeke in the yeare, where as twentie would ſuffice? One of the ſinnes of *Sodome* was (as you haue heard) fulneſſe of bread, ſo I

may

may ſay, that one of the chiefe ſinnes of this land is fulneſſe of drinke, and ſurely not the leaſt, nor in the laſt place of thoſe which haue cauſed this our Staffe of breade to be broaken. For if a man do but note the abhominable quaffing and carowſing, with kneeling on their knees to their God *Bacchus* (I ſuppoſe) as it is vſed in many places, in taking of their liquor, it would make any Chriſtian heart to ake to beholde or heare thereof.

This I ſay, I take to be not onely the cauſe or one of the cauſes why the ſtaffe of our corporall foode is broken; but alſo of our Spirituall in ſo many places ſcanted, through the ſtrength of many, who are ſtrong to ſet vp drunkenneſſe, as the Prophet *Eſay* writeth. Capter. 5. who ſhould bee rather dealing and diſtributing of that liquor, of the which if a man once taſte or drinke of, hee ſhall neuer more be a thirſt, as our ſauiour ſhoweth, Io. 4. 14. This is it that the Prophet *Amos* meant, ſaying: Chapter. 8. 11. *Beholde, the daies come ſaith the Lord, that I will bring a Famine in the land, not a Famine of Breade, nor a thirſt of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord.* Which famine euen in theſe our daies of dearth & ſcarſitie, hath not bene a little threatned, and which thirſt is tē thouſand times worſe then the former. For this is the famine of the ſoule, and the ſpirituall drought that the Prophet *Ieremy* ſpeaketh of Chap. 50. ver. 38 ſaying: *Siccit as ſuper aquas. A drought is vpon his waters, and they ſhall be dryed vp. &c.* For by how much the ſoule is more precious then the body, by ſo much the more is the death or famine of it to be lamented, then of the other.

But heere it may bee demaunded whether that the ſame bee the cauſes of the one as the other? no, for as the thinges be different, ſo the cauſes are likewiſe cõtrarie, & yet being conſidered in a ſpirituall thought, we ſhall finde them verie correſpondent the one to the other. For as diſobedience, corrupting, & vnthankfulneſſe are the cauſes of the one, ſo reiecting & neglecting are the cauſes of the other.

Euen as the Iſraelites when they were cloyed with Manna, murmured, and had Quailes; ſo manye amongſt vs at this day, beeing drunken with ſuperfluitie (but not of Wine) haue ſpewed vp againe that which was good at the firſt receauing, and haue longed for that which was worſe, as the Iſraelites did for the fleſh-pots of Egipt.

Now concerning the third cauſe which I haue aſſigned to vnthankfulneſſe; for as much as the Lord in a maner looketh for nothing elſe at our hands, for all the benefits that hee hath giuen vs, appeareth by *Dauid*. Pſalm. 116. verſe, 12. 17. where he ſaith, *What ſhall I giue or render vnto the Lord for all his benefits towards mee?* The anſwere is, *I will offer to thee a ſacrifice of praiſe, and will call vpon the name of the Lord:* as if he would ſay, *I will giue him thankes, and praiſe his name*. And againe, Pſame. 63. verſ. 5. 6. *As long as I liue I will magnifie thee on this manner, and will liſt vp my hands in thy name: my ſoule ſhall bee ſatisfied euen as it were with marrowe and fatneſſe, when my mouth prayſeth thee with ioyfull lippes*. Yet our mouthes cannot ſo doe, becauſe they are otherwiſe filled with Oathes, Curſſes, Blaſphemies, and other prophanes, or elſe vtterlye mute and

ſilent,

ſilent, as I haue ſhewed.

Thus much concerning the cauſes both originall and accidentall of Dearth, the Metaphores, or phraſe of ſpeech, the ſenſe and meaning thereof, and the Miſteries and Doctrines therein contained. And ſo now I come to the effects and fruits thereof. (*And I will ſend Famine vpon it*) this Famine as you haue heard is to bee taken two manner of waies; that is, eyther for the defect of Spirituall or of Corporall foode. Concerning the firſt, which I holde moſte proper vnto this place, the whole ſcriptures are pregnant, ſhewing how God, not oncly threatned, but alſo brought the ſame to paſſe in all ages, puniſhing ſometimes therewith ſome particular places and perſons: ſometimes whole Nations, and ſometimes the whole world, as wee read in Ge. Ch: 12. 26. 41. & 47. How the Lord viſited the South in the daies of *Abraham* and *Iacob*: Egipt in the daies of *Pharaoh*, Samaria & Ieruſalem & other Nations from time to time.

The prophets *Eſay*, *Ieremie*, and *Ezechiel* in one and the ſelfe ſame Chap, viz. the 14. (as if they had ſpoken al three with one mouth, as they did by one ſpirit) doe ſhew that the Lord will kil the root of *Paleſtina*, and not leaue the rebellions of Iuda & Ierulem, vnpuniſhed with famine. How iuſt & true the Lord is in al his promiſes & propheſeings, our own experiẽce can beſt of all bear witnes, who haue taſted the twigs of this rod three ſeuerall times within the ſpace of twentie foure yeres, wherein we haue or might haue heard and ſeene the poore, miſerablye crying, and dying through the extreami-

tie of dearth and famine. Oh! but happilye you will say, I neuer heard or saw any such. *Ans.* But I haue, who am both *auritus* and *oculatus testis*: that is, both an eare and an eye witnesse thereof.

Indeed I think that many of superiour place haue not seene so much: for as the common saying is, *Aquila non capit muscas*, the Eagle taketh no Flies, because shee soareth so hye. And so doe many of the richer sort of this world, sildome or neuer beholde nor heare, or thoroughlye feele and vnderstand the State of the poore distressed: As Dives little felt what were *Lazarus* paines or hūger. But in as much as the Lord hath said *he wil send famine vpon the land that committeth a trespasse against him*, let that bee one proofe. Like as that wofull fact of that Woman in Samaria, that sodde her Sonne one day, and complained to the King that her Neighbour would not doe the like for her next day.

But heere it may be demaunded vnto what maner of persons this dearth of ours is a Plague, or a famine? *Ans.* Not vnto the rich I suppose, for they feele it not, no more then *Pharaoh* did the dearth in Egipt, and therefore it may well be called the poore mans plague, for so it is: But what? you wil then say haue not the rich sinned as well as the poore? yes. And haue not they procured this plague as wel as the poore? yes. Why then are not they punished as the rest? My censure you shall see.

First I say with the Apostle Saint *Peter*, that iudgement beginneth at the house of God. Secondly like as *Pharao* felt not the stroake of dearth in Egipt, nor his iolly courtiers about him, yet you see how afterward

ward hee and they were all destroyed in the red sea. So when God hath visited the poore (which are his owne house) hee will come vppon the mighty with greater iudgemẽts afterwards: for as *Salomon* saith, *the mighty shal be mightily tormented*, Sap. 6. 6. And *Dauid* saith: *He will not verily cleere the wicked*. It followeth. *And I wil destroy both man and beast forth of it*: Such is the iealousie and wrath of Almightie God, that when sinners will not repent, he not onely doth punish their sinnes to the third and fourth generation; but also extendeth the same, aswell vnto the vnreasonable creatures, such as the Beasts and Birdes are, as vnto the vnsensible earth and fruites thereof, by making it either as hard as yron vnder foote, or else the Heauen as brasse ouer head. q. d. Both shall bee vnfruitefull and vnseasonable; so that by their distemperature, the Beastes or Cattel shall likewise be destroyed, As for example, what murrens of Cattel, and rots of Sheepe haue wee had in this Land, within the space of these fewe yeares past? And as for the persons that dyed that way, who can tell the number or names of them? And so I come to the third and last part of this Text, wherein are set downe the helpes and remedies of this dearth now beeing, if they may be effectually put in practise. It followes: *Though these three men*, Noe, Daniel *and* Iob *were amongst them, they shall deliuer but their owne soules by their Righteousnes, saith the Lord*: But mee thinkes I heare some say, what helpes or remedies are to be found or gathered from these wordes? or what point of doctrine or knowledge is heere to be had concerning the same?

Anſwere. Surely all that euer the word of God teacheth to be done in ſuch a caſe; and that is enough and ſufficient, if wee had eyes to ſee, or hearts to vnderſtand. But in as much as many haue eies and ſee not, and hearts and vnderſtand not, (for the natural man perceiueth not the things that pertaine to the ſpirit of God) for how can he, ſeeing that they are ſpiritually diſcerned? Therfore haue I thought good at this time to lay opē more at large the ſence, Doctrin, & vſes of this Scripture. But firſt let vs conſider what coherence or reference, it may haue with other places of like nature: for in *Ieremy* the 15. Chap. v. 1. it is ſaide vpon like occaſion, *Though Moſes & Samuel ſtood before me, yet mine affection could not bee toward this people.* The ſence or meaning of both which places is thus: that there is no entreatie with the Lord for the wicked and vnrepentant people of the world: But in no caſe anye preiudice vnto the faithfull flocke of Ieſus Chriſt. For, as we may ſee how abſolutely the Lord refuſeth to heare *Moſes* and *Samuel*, praying for them, yet it ſhutteth not the dore of repentance to the faithful, and penitent, as we finde in verſe 15. & 19. where the Lord both promiſeth vnto *Ieremy*, that if hee would returne vnto him, and the people with him, they ſhould bee brought againe, and ſtand before the Lord.

And *Ieremy* for his owne part (notwithſtanding the former communication) prayeth ſaying: *O Lord, thou knoweſt, remember mee, and viſite, and reuenge mee of my perſecutors, take mee not awaye in the continuance of thy wrath, &c.* Euen as in this place it is ſaid,

ſaide, though *Noe*, *Daniel*, and *Iob* were amongſt them, &c. where againe we learne, that as there is no place nor reaſon of reconciliation, left vnto the wicked, cõtinuing in their wickednes, yet the faithfull and repentant (how few ſoeuer they be) haue alwaies free acceſſe vnto the throane of grace, ſo oft as they ſhal return vnto the Lord their God, which maketh much for the conſolation of the godly, as on the contrary part, it may increaſe the terrour & trouble of the wicked, more and more: which doctrine the Prophet *Dauid* maketh plaine, pſ. 32. 10. ſaying; *Many ſorrowes ſhall come to the wicked, but he that truſteth in the Lord, mercy ſhall imbrace him on euery ſide.* A moſt euidẽt example we haue of this, in the deſtruction of *Core*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, with their cõpany: & the deliuerance of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, with their partakers, notwithſtanding there was offring of Incenſe on both ſides, yea, and that at one & the ſelfe ſame time, yet the rebellious part onely periſhed and the obedient were preſerued and deliuered.

Againe, when the plague was begunne, and the wrath of the Lord gone foorth, for the murmuring of thoſe that eſcaped the ſwallowing of *Corah* (as were read in the ſame chapter, v. 14. ſo that there died 14. thouſand and ſeauen hundered in a ſhort time, and the Lord had ſaide, that he would deſtroy euen the whole congregation; yet when *Aaron* at the commaund of *Moſes*, had taken a Cenſer, & put fire therein of the Altar, with Incenſe, and made the attonement, hee ſtanding betweene the dead and the liuing, the plague ceaſed.

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A ſinguler document for vs at this day, who ſtanding in the like predicament of puniſhment of (for as they were puniſhed with the plague of peſtilence, for their rebellions againſt the miniſters of God, euen ſo we for our rebellions againſt the word of God with dearth and Famine) and therfore had neede to take our Cenſers, that is, our hearts, and put fire therein, (as *Salomon* ſaith in the perſon of VViſdome) *My Sonne giue mee thy heart*, ,and put therein the fire and zeale, that wee may bee feruent in Prayer, and call vpon the name of the Lord earneſtlye, as our high Prieſt Ieſus Chriſt hath taught by his owne example; who in his Agonie, when the hand of the Lord was vpon him, as wee reade in S. Luke, chap. 22. verſe. 44. prayed moſt inſtantly. This is the verie doctrine of this place, for what doth the prophet elſe mean, whē he ſaith: *Though* Noe, Daniel & Iob, *that were amōg it thē?* but this, that ſuch mē as theſe were, who called vpon the name of the lord in their troubles, as *Daniel* preached his word faithfully as *Noe*, and practiſed the ſame effectually in their cōuerſations, as *Iob* did, ſhal deliuer their own ſoules by their righteouſnes, that is, ſuch as repent them truely of their ſinnes, and put their truſt in the Lord, euen as *Salomon* likewiſe teacheth ſaying: When there ſhal be famine in the land: when there ſhall be peſtilence, blaſting, or Mildew, Groſhopper, or caterpiller, when the enemie ſhall beſeidge them in the cittie of the Land, or any plague, or any ſickneſſe. Then what prayer or ſupplication ſoeuer ſhall be made of any man, or of al thy people Iſrael, when euerie one ſhal knowe his owne Plague, and

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his own diſeaſe,& ſhal ſtretch forth his hands towards this houſe, meaning the Temple: Heare thou then in heauen thy dwelling place,and be merciful and giue euerie man according to his waies,as thou dooſt knowe his heart, for thou onely knoweſt the hearts of the Children of men. Thus doth *Salomon* (like as *Moſes*) teach, how in al our troubles and diſtreſſes, we muſt take the cenſure of a troubled and ſanctified ſoule,and come to the Lord his Temple, whereſoeuer two or three ſhall bee gathered together in the name of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt,and make our praiers and ſupplications,knowing & acknowledging our plague,and our diſeaſe,that is,our own ſin,& ſhal ſtretch forth our hands towards the new Ieruſalem:that then God will heare in heauen his dwelling place,and be mercifull, & giue euery one according to his waies. Therefore ſhall euerie one that is Godly ſaith *Dauid*, Pſalm.32.6.make his praier vnto thee in time,when thou maiſt be found.And therefore are theſe Patriarkes and Prophets heere named, *Noe*,*Daniel* and *Iob*, who all of them called vpon the Lord in their neceſſities,and were holpen as we read in Gen.7. Dan.6. Iob.39. chapters. For heere by prayer-making or calling on the Lord,is ment the whole worſhip of God,a part put for the whole,as likewiſe our Sauiour teacheth in the Goſpell ſaying: *Come vnto me all ye that are wearie and laden and I wil eaſe you*, where by comming vnto me, Chriſt teacheth what hee would haue vs to doe, namely: Firſt to beleeue in him, to heare his word, to receiue his Sacraments,to ſanctifie his Saboaths and powre foorth our hearts before him, in all ma-

ner of praier, cõfeſſion, thanks-giuing, & ſupplication, as we learn in 1. *Tim.* 2. 1. Therfore doth the prophet heere ſay; *Though* Noe, Daniel, *and* Iob *were amongſt them*; ſignifying heereby, how ſmall the number of true conuerts ſhould bee in all ages. Likewiſe *Noe* before the Law, amongſt the Patriarkes, as *Daniel* vnder the Lawe amongſt the Prophets, and *Iob* without the Lawe amongſt the Gentiles.

Againe, like as *Noe* ſignifieth reſt, ſo there ſhould be few at al times in the Church that ſhould bee at reſt or peace with God, through a true and liuelye faith in Ieſus Chriſt.

And as *Daniel* ſignifieth iudgement of the Lord, ſo there ſhould be fewe that vnderſtand aright his iudgements. And as *Iob* ſignifieth ſorrowfull, ſo there ſhould be few truely ſorrowfull or penitent for their ſinnes, as by perfect experience wee prooue it in theſe daies; for notwithſtanding the Goſpell hath long time ſhined amongſt vs; and the iudgements of God haue bene plentifully powred down vpon vs, both by ſea & land, by Fire & water, Plague and Peſtilence, Dearth and Famine, &c. yet where is one *Noe* or preacher of righteouſnes, that buildeth vp the Arke (as God bad him) as he did? or where is one *Daniel* that refuſeth the Kings portion, and prouiſion; that is, any pleaſure or profit of this life, and contents himſelfe with pulſe and water, giuing himſelfe to prayer and faſting, as *Daniel* did? or where is one *Iob* to be found ſo patient and penitent, that of whome it may bee ſaide, as it was of him in all his afflictions, that in all this hee ſinned

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not, neither charged God fooliſhly: for theſe be the verie true helps & meanes to redreſſe this dearth & Famine, if it wold pleaſe God to giue vs ſuch grace.

The Lord be mercifull vnto vs, and create in vs new hearts, and right ſpirits, that wee may in due time breake off our ſinnes by repentance, and turne to the Lord our God with all our heartes vnfainedly. Amen.

(*Were amongſt them*) *q.d.* either to preach to them as *Noe* did to the olde world, or to pray for them, as *Daniel* did for the Iſraelites in Captiuitie, or to giue example of holy life, as *Iob* did of all long ſuffering, patience, and repentance, which are the verie true meanes and remedies of theſe iudgemēts of God now inflicted vpon vs, as I haue ſhewed, and as the Prophet *Dauid* prooueth moſte plainelye in the 67. Pſalme ſaying: *Let the people praiſe thee O God, yea, let all the people praiſe thee, Then ſhall the Earth bring foorth her encreaſe, and God, euen our own God ſhall giue vs his bleſſing.*

Where vnder the word (*Praiſe*) are contained all the dueties of our deuotion towards God, as Faith, Prayer, Preaching, Repentance, holy life, &c. But happilye heere ſome will ſay, haue not wee manye Godlye Preachers, deuout Orators, and diuine liuers amongſt vs at this day as euer were as *Daniel* was then liuing amongſt the Iewes, as likewiſe this prophet *Ezechel*, a man of God. &c True it is, that both *Daniel* and *Ezechiel* were thē liuing, & amongſt the Iewes, as it is to be hoped that there are many of the Seruants of God amongſt vs at this day, both Prophets and Paſtors, and yet by reaſon of the captiuitie that they were in, and the

peoples Idolatrie which they had fette vp in their hearts, (as this Prophet *Ezechiel* ſheweth in the beginning of this 14. Ch. how they had done, ſaying: *Son of man, theſe mẽ haue ſet vp their Idols in their harts, and put the ſtumbling blocke of their iniquities before their face, ſhould I being required anſwere them?* I ſay, what by reaſon of the peoples Idolatrie, and their captiuitie and hard entreaty, they were neither regarded nor beleeued. As many of the ſeruants of God amongſt vs at this day are in like maner dealt with: from whence may be gathered, that the people doe not make that vſe of Gods ſeruants, whether abſent or preſent amongſt them, as they ought to do: God graunt this ſinne be not amongſt vs, but it is greatly to be feared that it is, for where is one *Zaccheus* amongſt the rich that ſtandeth forth, and ſaith in this needefull time of comfort, *Beholde Lord, the halfe of my goods I giue to the poore, &c.* or where is their one *Lidias* heart ſo opened, that doth cheerfully receiue or charitably refreſh the ſeruãts of God as ſhe did? I ſay, where is there one Man or one Woman ſo wonne by the word that layeth a part one linke of his Golden chaine, one lace of her veluet ſleeue, or abateth one breadth of their broade ruffes, or ſetteth a part one diſh of their dainty ſuperfluities at euery feaſt, towards the releefe of ſo many poore Lazares as aboũd round about vs at this day? yea, what haue I ſeene to the contrarie? namely thus: that where there hath bene a motion made on the Saboath day in the Church by the miniſter to the whole congregation aſſembled in the behalfe of two poore, ſicke, naked, hungrie, and impotent perſons for ſome releefe; there hath bene gathered in the ſame day, in

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the afternoone, foure times as much for a Beare-ward and his beare, as hath bene giuen and collected towardes thoſe two poore Chriſtian perſons, which argueth the coldneſſe of charitie in manye hearts, and the deadnes of deuotion amongſt thoſe that ſhould ſhine as Lampes in all manner of good workes aboue others. So that of the true zealous: deuout and charitable conuerted Chriſtian indeed, I may ſay as *Iob* ſpeaketh of the good interpreter; if there bee one amongſt a thouſand it is maruaile: wherefore, in the way of a general Admonition, I ſay, let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leaſt he fall, for but onely *Noe*, *Daniell*, and *Iob* ſhall deliuer their owne ſoules by their righteouſnes, that is, from the plague or puniſhment that I wil bring vpon them, from whence ariſeth a double queſtion to be diſſolued.

Firſt, whether any man can deliuer his own ſoule by his righteouſnes? Secõdly, whether there be any ſuch righteouſnes in man, as that thereby he ſhould deliuer his owne ſoule, or the ſoule of another man from any preſent plague or puniſhment, or from euerlaſting death, as ſome ſuppoſe? To the firſt I anſwere, that no man can deliuer his ſoule, nor the ſoule of another man from death temporall, or eternall, which the Prophet *Dauid* prooueth plainly ſaying: *Yet a man by no meanes can redeeme his brother, he cannot giue his ranſome to God, ſo precious is the redẽptiõ of their ſoules & the continuance for euer, that he may liue ſtil for euer, & not ſee the graue.* Pſ. 49. ver. 7. 8. 9. Secondly, to approue that there is no ſuch righteouſnes in man, as therby to deliuer his owne Soule, the

prophet Dauid saith plainelye, Psalme 143. 2. *Enter not in iudgement with thy Seruant O Lord, for nō flesh is righteous in thy sight.* And the Prophet *Esay*, Chap. 64. verse 6. saith, *But we haue bene all as an vncleane thing, and all our righteousnesse is as filthy cloutes.* Saint *Paul* also teacheth, that not by the workes of righteousnesse which wee haue wrought, but according to his mercie hee saued vs, by the washing of the newe birth, and renewing of the holye Ghost. *Tit.* 3. 5. But then you will say, how dooth the Prophet heere say, that they should deliuer but their owne soules by their righteousnesse? that is, as I haue shewed already; from some temporall plague or punishment threatned or deserued. As wee reade of the King of *Niniue* and his people, how they preuented their destruction by repentāce which otherwise should haue ensued within fortye daies. Of *Hezekia*, who calling vppon the Lord in the time of his sickenes, and truely repenting, prolonged his daies for 15: yeres afterward, & so examples might be giuen of many others.

Againe, it may bee answered, that *Soule* in this place is taken for the life of man, as *Ionas* delareth the like. Io. 4. 3. saying. *And now O Lord, I beseech thee to take away my life, for it is better for me to die then liue.* Where the Latine word which is put for life is *Anima*, which signifieth the soule, so that the righteousnesse of any man, that is, his perfection, vprightnesse, or holinesse of life, is but to deliuer him from some temporall Plague or punishment, and not that neither, except hee require and seeke it at the handes of God, in and by the righteousnesse, merits, and Mediation of Iesus Christ.

By

By whome as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Col.* 4. 13: *I am able to doe all thinges by the helpe of Chriſt, who ſtrengtheth me, and without whome we are able to do nothing*, as himſelfe teacheth: Ion. 15. verſ. 5. ſaying: *Sine me poteſtis nihil. Without mee yee can doe nothing.*

But dooth not this gaine ſay the opinion of our aduerſaries the Papiſts, both for Inuocation & Saints, and for merrit of workes? let it be well conſidered that followeth, and ye ſhall ſee, The words that followe are theſe, (*Saith the Lord*) which words are added for a confirmation of the former Doctrine in mine opinion, as if the holy Ghoſt had foreſeene, (as no doubt but he did) how much heereafter it would bee impugned, as wee ſee how it is come to paſſe at this day, amongſt our aduerſaries the Papiſts, who relye much vpon the helps and audience of perſons departed this life; and alſo teach and holde both the merrit of the perſon, and of the worke, affirming that there is ſuch a dignitie in the perſon, that Infants dying immediatelye after Baptiſme, are worthy of eternall life; becauſe although they want good workes, yet are not voide of this kinde of merrit. And for the merrit of workes, they ſay there is ſuch a dignitie or excellencie in the work, wherby it is made fit & enabled to deſerue euerlaſting life for the dooer. For works (as they holde) are meritorious two waies. Firſt by couenant, becauſe God hath made a promiſe of reward to them. Secondly, by their owne dignitie, for Chriſt hath merited that they ſhould merit, (as they ſay) both which poinres are ſufficiently repelled by this our Text, wherein the prophet ſaith:

Though

Though these three men, Noe, Daniel *and* Iob, *&c.* which were as holy, worthy and excellent as euer were any, yet they shal deliuer but their own soules by their owne righteousnesse: By which falleth to ground all merrit of workes, as well of *congruo* and *condigno*, as of *supererogation*, & that because partlye as our text saith, *They shall deliuer but their own soules*, as also because no flesh is righteous in his sight: whereby, neither Infants, how young soeuer they die, (who are defiled in the wombe) and elders who liue they neuer so long, yet cannot boast of one daies cleanenesse, nor iustly say, my heart is pure; & further, because all our dignitie, excellencie and righteousnes is non otherwise thē a defiled cloath: finally, if any man would builde vp inuocation of Saints heeron, besides, the verie expresse words of our Text, the Apostle Saint *Paul* will tell vs, that there is but one mediator betweene God and man, euen Iesus Christ, who gaue himselfe a ransome for al men, to be a testimonie in due time, 1. Tim. 2. 5. 6. And so as God, which is the God of al trueth, hath spoken and said, Though *Noe*, *Daniel* and *Iob* were amongst them, yet they shall deliuer but their owne soules by their righteousnesse: which may teach vs not to build our saluation vpon any mans holines, guifts, or perfection, but rather euerie man to looke vnto God, and to the doctrine of his holy word, which teacheth first that the iust shall liue by faith: and secondly that he will reward euerie man according to his workes, that is, to them which by continuance in well dooing seeke glorie and honor, and immortallitie, eternall life: but vnto them that are conten-

contentious, and disobey the truth, and obey vnrighteousnesse, shall be indignation and wrath.

Therefore let no man so deuote himselfe vnto other men, though they seeme as holy, iust, and righteous as *Noe*, *Daniel* and *Iob*, that in respect of thē, him or them; they contemne all others. A common fault in these daies. God for his mercies sake giue vs eies to see, and hearts to vnderstand, the holy misteries of his sacred word, that we be not onely hearers of the same, but doers also. And for so much as by our sins, we haue caused thy iudgements of dearth and famine (with the rest) to be powred vpon vs, giue vs O Lord a true touch and feeling thereof inwardly in our hearts, that wee dally no longer with our selues in our sinnes, and abuse of thy good creatures, but rather consider with our selues how farre and how much we haue thereby prouoked thy wrath: remembring also that for eating one peece of an Apple, thou expelledst *Adam* out of Paradice; & for one lye thou destroyedst *Ananias* and *Zaphira*: And for gathering of a few stickes on the Saboath day, thou causedst that Israelite to bee stoned. But our sinnes against thee committed haue not bene by one and by one, but by Millions and Thousands, so that if we should take vpon vs to number them, wee know not where to begin, nor how to make an end. And yet thou continuest holy, & sendest foorth the light of thy word, and the sound of thy Trumpet to awake and raise vs vp, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. O Lord make vs wise vnto the kingdome of heauen & that we may no longer relye vpon our owne wits, workes or wisdome, which is

carnal, sensual, and diuelish: but teach vs how to deliuer our owne soules by our righteousnesse, that thou maist deliuer both our soules and bodies from all euill, both heere in the kingdome of grace, and there hereafter in the kingdome of glorie: that we thy Church militant may be like thy Church Triumphant, and that by the merits and mediation of Iesus Christ onely, in whome are all thy promises, both yea and Amen. Vnto which Iesus Christ, with thee O father and the holy Ghost, our comforter, three persons in one eternal and blessed deitie, be giuen all praise, power, glorie and benediction both now and for euer. Amen.

A prouerbe

A prouerbe pronounced to all the cruell,

couetous, and hard hearted Corne-maisters, Cloath-maisters, and al other olde Pinching penny-fathers at this day amongst vs, who esteem more of their vnrighteous Mammon then of the counsell of Christ our blessed Sauiour, who aduertiseth them to make them friends therof in due time, that they might be receiued into euerlasting tabernacles, and yet will not.

Or as much as it is saide by Christ our Sauiour, in his holy Gospell, that it is easier for a Camell to goe through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of GOD, And againe, in the selfe same place, *That it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heauen.* I maruaile that the rich men of these our daies do no better looke vnto it, then many of them doe, especially ye such as hauing the substance of this world in such superfluitie and aboundance as they haue: for was it not vppon great reason that our Sauiour did so say, seeing that the desire of money is the root of all euill, and they that will be rich fall into tẽptation and

and ſnares, and into manye fooliſh and noyſome luſts, which drown mẽ in perdition & deſtructiõ: as we may eaſily ſee & perceiue both by the manifolde vanities they doe embrace and maintaine, as alſo by the ſundrie wickednesſes and corruptions they doe commit through the power and ſtrength, I would ſay, the vaine hope & confidence they haue in their wealth: ſome building Babel or Towers of confuſion, ſome heaping vp Mydæs mountaines, and cannot tell who ſhall inherit or diſpend them: Some as *Dives* in vanitie of apparell, ſome in ſuperfluitie of meats wines, drinks: & ſome in hawking, hunting, Cock-fighting, Beare-bayting, Dycing, dauncing: and others in Tobacco taking, diſpending their reuenewes, or the greateſt part thereof, (for what is it to ſee a yong man of twentie foure yeres, healthy in body, ſound in conſtitution, to diſpend an hundred markes *per annum* in Tobacco, when as his Father, Grandfather & whole generation before him, happilye neuer in all their time ſpent one farthing that way? What a vanitie is it then for a man to ſpend ſo much that way, without the which hee may liue wel enough? Beſides, if a man ſhould rip vp the treacheries and treaſons that haue beene from time to time complotted amongſt the richer ſort, we ſhall finde it moſte true that *Salomon* ſaith. *Pro.* 10 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life, but the reuenues of the wicked to ſin*, As if hee would ſay more plainly, the wicked ſpend al their lands, rents, reuenues & liuings, for the moſt part in euil & vngodly waies. 1. In one kinde of vanity or other, ſuch as I haue ſhewed, which how true it falleth out in theſe

daies,

daies, who seeth not? Amongst all which wickednesses, vanities, or sinnes, there is not a greater in mine opinion, then this that is heere mentioned in this sentence following. *Him that withdraweth the Corne the people wil curse, &c.* For how be it that other vanities and corruptions doe bring destruction to the doers thereof, and to some few of their posteritie This reacheth further euen to the whole multitude or number of the poore, which is so infinite, that it cannot easily be numbred And by how much the more any euil sparseth it selfe abroad, or groweth more generall, by so much the more it is reprooueable, and to be condemned.

Then high time it is for the greate ones of this world, the greate rich *Diueses* I meane, that spend so manye poundes and pence in meere vanities, in effecting or bringing to passe so many great & greeuous corruptions, (as many of them do) to looke & consider with themselues in time, what will bee the end of all this? verilye none other then what is expressed in this prouerb & sentence of *Salomon* heere following. First, that they shall but gaine the curse of the people; Secondly of God: for the preuenting and auoiding of both which, I haue thought good to giue this admonition to all that haue their eyes open, I meane any sparke of grace, that they might yet in time bethinke themselues, and turne to the Lord from their euill waies. Be counselled therefore O ye rich, & receiue the word of exhortation, make friendes of your vnrighteous Mammon, sell that you haue and giue almes, *For what auantageth it a man to winne the whole world, and to looose his owne soule?*

Attend vnto the voice of him that once ſaide *Woe be vnto you rich, for you haue your conſolation.* Wherefore learne to ſuffer ſome affliction heere in this life, that yee bee not afflicted in the world to come: We are taught in the word of God to beare one anothers burden, beare ye therefore ſome part of this croſſe with your poore bretheren that are ſo hardlye preſſed with pennurie, dearth and famine. Bethink with your ſelues how many good dueties yee haue beene called vnto: how many good occaſions haue bene miniſtred, and how many by you omitted; of euery of which ye ſhal be ſure one day to giue an account. But yet me thinks I heare the voice of Chriſt, ſaying in mine eare, *Tis eaſier for a Camell to goe through the eye of an needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heauen.* Yea, but what do the rich men pleade for themſelues in this caſe? namelye thus: that although it be vnpoſſible with men, yet not vnpoſſible with God: well, I graunt it, yet I ſay, were it not better for a man to make his election ſure and certaine vnto him, then to ſtand vpon poſſibilities? wee commonlye ſay, better is one bird in hand then two in the buſh; ſo I ſay, it were far better for men to make their election ſure by dooing of good works, while ſpace & grace is offered, then with the fiue fooliſh virgins to runne vp and down from one to another, to buy oyle for their lampes, when none can be had for any money. Who knoweth not that there is nothing impoſſible with God? Chriſt ſaued the theefe vpon the gallowes repenting; that was one of his poſſibilities, to approoue himſelfe to bee God, but ſhall men therefore play the theeues all the daies of

their

their liues, and rob God of his honour, as many doe the poore of their goods, and say nothing is vnpossible with God? is not this rather to tempt God then to serue him? to resist the Lord then to obey him? he so dayly calling vpon them by the Doctrine of his word to be liberall, to be mercifull, to bee louing, kinde, and naturally affected one towards another, and yet it cannot be obtained at our hands, nor wrung out of the hearts of many, who are so wonne by the world, that they will not leaue off to treasure vp vengeance for themselues against the day of the wrath of the Lord, who will reward euerye man according vnto his workes: which one sound of the Lords Trumpet were sufficient to make a breach in our obstinate soules (if it were well attended vnto) and to cause vs to abhorre sinne as a Serpent, or at the least to conceiue some feare in committing thereof, and continuing therein so resolute as many do. God for his mercies sake in Iesus Christ vouchsafe to lighten the eyes, and open the hearts of those that are either so wilfullye blinde or hardned in heart, that they will not see nor vnderstād those things which are so apparāt before their faces, that they may in good time bee conuerted from their euill waies, to serue the Lord in all holy obedience and newnesse of life. Amen.

Your well willer in the Lord.

W.W.

W.W.

A Meditation vpon the 26. verse of the 11. Chap. of the Prouerbes; which may fitly be called, The poore-mans Plea.

Pro. 11. verse. 26.

He that withdraweth Corne, the people will curse him, but blessing shall be vpon his head that selleth Corne.

LIke as for the incitation and stirring vp of good men, vnto vertue & godlines, there are many priuiledges and promises set downe in Gods worde, for their further encouragement and going forward therein, So againe on the other side, for the terrour and reproofe of the wicked, there are many sentences and sayings recorded, to the end they might desist & leaue off their wickednes, and turne to the Lord their God. Amongst which, this is one that I haue read vnto you, and yeeldeth most euident demonstration, as in the seuerall parts thereof (which are a curse and a blessing) may easily be gathered. For in the first part it is saide: *He that withdraweth Corne, the people will curse him*: from whence we may first learne, that like as it is not vnlawfull to keepe or lay vp Corne in time of plenty, against a time of scarsitie, and dearth, or want (as *Ioseph* did in Aegipt) so in time of scarsitie

and dearth, when we may conueniently ſpare it, & others doe want it, then to with-holde the ſelling of, or to keepe it hutched vp in our barnes, Ricks or Garners, in hope to raiſe the price of it, and to enrich our ſelues by vndooing or famiſhing of others, is a verie inhumane and vnchriſtian part. And this is it, that the *Holy Ghoſt* reporteth in this place, a common fault at this day, for as wee are taught by the Lawe and the Prophets, *To doe as wee would bee done vnto*, as we reade in *Mat.* 7. verſe 12. Now ſay then that this were thy caſe, or mine, (as it is of manye thouſands) that either of vs did want foode or rayment, would we be content ſo to be dealt withall, as to giue or paye double or treble the price for eyther, as they were vſed to be ſold at, or as in any equitie or conſcience they are worth? for ſo are many compelled to do, or elſe they cannot haue them. And all becauſe that many through couetouſneſſe and crueltie, and hardnes of heart are giuen ſo many waies to with-drawe their Corne from their Bretheren as they doe. For not only doe they hutch and hide it vp in their Barnes, Rickes, and Garners, not vouchſafing to ſtore the Markets with it as they ought; But alſo when they bring out any, it is in ſo ſcant and pinching a manner and meaſure, and at ſo hie a price, that the poore who moſte do want it, are neuer the neere, beeing not able to compaſſe it. Beſides this, when they cannot ſell it at their own price, that they would haue for it, they ſet it vp, or ſend it home againe, and then tranſport it by water beyond Seas vnto ſome other place of Marte, where they may ſell it at their pleaſure. And by all

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theſe waies may it be ſaid that they with draw their Corne from the people: as firſt, when they bring it not to the market, ſecondly when they ſell it or hold it at too deere a price, and thirdly when they tranſport it to other places: and therefore it were good that all ſuch with-drawers of Corne from the people, or from the Market, did well conſider of this, that the holy Ghoſt hath heere left recorded for the opening of their hearts, if they be not paſt cure, as I feare me many of them be; for he that doth either miſerably hutch it vp in his Barne, as the rich man mentioned in the 12. of S. *Luke*, that built his barnes bigger, or hold the price ſo hie, that the poore cannot reach it, as many did in the daies of the prophet *Amos*, Chap. 8. 5. ſaying: *When will the new Moone be gone, that we may ſell Corne, and the Saboath, that we may ſet foorth wheate, and make the* Ephah *ſmall, and the* ſhekel *greate, and falſifie the weights by deceit?* or vnneighbourly tranſport it vn to other nations or people (as many amongſt vs do at this day) the which how dreadfull and damnable a thing it is, we may learne by theſe manifolde Doctrines and diuine dueties, which Chriſt our Sauiour hath left recorded in his holy word, teaching vs the contrary. As namely & firſt of all, to be merciful, and therfore ſaith, *Bee mercifull as your heauenly father is mercifull*: meaning thereby, that wee ſhould rather giue Corne, and other foode franckly and freelye vnto thoſe that want it, then by any cruell and couetous meanes, to with-draw it from them: as our Sauiour plainely in an other place ſaith: *Giue to euerie man that asketh, & frō him that wold borrow, turn not thy face away.*

This also was the meaning of Saint *Iohn*, when he saide, *Whosoeuer hath this worlds goods and seeth his brother want, and releeueth him not, how dwelleth the loue of God in him?* Beside, our *Salomon* heere, v. 25. saith to the same purpose, *That the soule of the liberall waxeth fat, and he that gueth plentifully shal poure foorth.* As if he would say, as we commonly say, he shall haue neuer the lesse at the yeres end: yet so diffident and distrustfull are many in this case, that they will rather say with the Prince, mentioned in 2. Reg. 7. 2. who when *Eliza* propheſied of plenty, the day following, answered the man of God thus: *Though the Lord would make windowes in heauen, could this come to passe?* so diffident I say are many now adaies, especially of these withdrawers of Corne, that if a man speake to them in the word of the Lord, that is, perswading or exhorting them to liberallitie towards the poore, or vnto destributing of their Corne to the needy, at a reasonable price, by any the sentences or sayings of Christ, or manner of his miracles wrought vnto that end (as we may beholde by the encrease of the fiue barly-loaues, & two fishes, & seauen loaues, and a few fishes at an other time) they wil answer, as the prince before named, answered *Eliza, Though the Lord would make windowes in heauen &c.* For which cause let this be knowne againe vnto them, that he which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly. As by the example of *Dines* that rich withdrawer of Corne and bread (for by Corne heere, you may vnderstand bread, drink, cloth, coin, or any such like thing) that would not vouchsafe poore *Lazarus* the crustes nor crummes of his trencher,

cher, when he lay at his gate, begging for them: how righteously was he rewarded againe, when he would haue had of *Abraham* but one drop of water to coole the heat of his tongue, being tormented in hell fire, and could not haue it? a speciall document or warning to all with-drawers of Corne, Coyne, Cloth, or comfort from their brethren, in time of necessitie and distresse.

Other examples are left recorded in Gods word, to this end and purpose, *viz.* to stir vp the hard hearts of such pittilesse persons, as hauing aboundance of Corne, Cloth, &c. in possession, will not, notwithstanding al that can be saide vnto them, depart from one mite thereof to the perishing people of this world. I will rehearse but onely that so memorable a fact of *Ioseph*, as it is recorded in Gen. 45. 28. Vnto whome when his brethren came for Corne in time of scarsitie and dearth, he not only filled their sacks with Corn sufficient, but also gaue them their mony backe againe, which they had brought with them. And is this recorded in vaine (troe ye) and not for our imitation, aswel as for our instruction? as Saint *Paul* teacheth, saying Ro. 15. 4 *Whatsoeuer things are written afore time* (meaning in the word of God) *are written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture, might haue hope.* But alas, no examples can moue the mindes of mortall men, to depart from this transitory trash, though it were to the sauing of their soules. Earthy men earthly mindes: if men would but lift vp their hearts a little toward the Lord, and beholde the senseleſſe earth with the flowers and fruits therof,

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conſider the the Sunne, Moone and Starres, how euerie one of theſe in their kinde doe yeelde their ſent, ſauour, taſte, light, heate, and comfort to man; it might ſomething mooue them to ſhewe pittie and compaſſion towards their poore bretheren, ſtanding in neede thereof.

Of the *Pellican*, (a poore Bird) it is reported, that when ſhee hath brought foorth her young ones, they die, the which when ſhe perceiueth, ſhee lamenteth their death three daies, and then for their recouerie vnto life againe, what doth ſhee? euen ſtab her ſelfe in the breſt with her beake, vntil the blood drop out, which ſhe letting fall vppon her young ones, they doe immediately reuiue againe, but ſhee dies for it her ſelfe.

What a motiue might this bee to ſuch vnmercifull men, (as wee haue many amongſt vs) that in the like caſe, beholding many of their Bretheren and Siſters, euen (as it were) deade at their doores, or little better, will not droppe nor let fall one pennye out of their Purſes, nor abate one ſhilling of their prices, nor one buſhell of their corne, toward the releefe, comfort, or reuiuing of ſo manye hunger-ſtarued ſoules as daily pine away & periſh, and all by reaſon that they ſo with-drawe their Corne from them ſo many waies as they doe? For reſtraint of whoſe cruel & couetous conceites, let it be conſidered what the holy ghoſt hath heer left recorded, ſaying: *Him that with draweth the Corne, the people will curſe.* But is this ſuch a matter (wil they ſay) to haue the curſſe of the people? what care I for the curſe of a thouſand of them, when all their cur-

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ſes wil not doe mee ſo much harme, as one of my buſhels of wheate or Barlie will do me good.

Theſe and ſuch like are the ſpeeches of thoſe whoſe hearts are glewed to their golde, corne, and earthly commodities, in ſuch wiſe as that they make them their God, and ſo care not for the counſell of the Lord their God. But like as it was once ſo that great with-drawer of corne mentioned, *Luk.* 12. 18. whoſe groũd brought forth fruits plentiouſly, in ſo much that hee ſaide, *What ſhall I doe, becauſe I haue not roome where I may lay vp my fruites? and hee ſaide, this will I doe, I will pull downe my Barnes,* (as manye ſet vp their ricks for like purpoſe) *and builde greater, and therein will I gather my fruites, and my goods. And I will ſay to my Soule, thou haſt much goods laide vp in ſtore for manye yeares, liue at eaſe, eate, drinke, and take thy paſtime* (or as wee ſay) be merrie, and make good cheere, as many doe at this day: but what was ſaid to him in the end? *God ſaide to him, O foole, this night will they fetch away thy ſoule from thee: then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be that thou haſt prouided?* So it is with him that gathereth riches to himſelfe, and is not rich towards God, and ſo it is with al theſe, none ſo merrie with-drawers of corn, ſellers, or ſenders away therof, they are now locond and merrie, but the time will come, when they ſhall mourne and lament.

And heere it is worth the noting, that the Text ſaith. *They ſhall fetch away thy Soule,* whereby is ment the Deuill and his Angells: for like as it is recorded of *Lazarus* that pore begger when he died, that he was caried by the Angels into *Abrahams* boſome,

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but of the rich man there mẽtioned, the first newes that we heare of him after he was dead, he was in hell torments. Let euery one therefore that liueth in his pleasures, or couetous desires (as this rich man did, and as many other rich men doe at this present) make good vse heereof and take heed of withdrawing their Corne, Cloth, Coyne, or any thing els, from their poore brethren: for, say they liue neuer so pleasantly or happy, in the mean time the people do curse them, which although they care litle for; yet behold how great & grieuous a thing it is to haue the peoples curs deseruedly: for although it be saide pro. 26. 2. *The curse causeles commeth not, or shal not hurt*: yet the curse that is caused deseruedly, by crueltie, oppression, couetousnes, or by any other kinde of rigorous dealing, or violent meanes, shal not passe without perril & paine. For why, the reason is euident: the poore crie and the Lord heareth them, pſ. 10. 17. as if he would say, he reuengeth them, as he did the Israelites against the *Ægiptians*, we commonly say, a common Proverb, *Vax populi, vox dei*, that is, the voice of the people is the voyce of God, or that which the people doe most agree vpon or speake is the voice of God, q. d. whome the multitude did curse, God himselfe doth curse. For as he is cursed of God that remoueth the land marke, that is the Merestone or ridge of his neighbour, so as he that remoueth or withdraweth the Corne from the people: at the least we must take it for a grieuous plague, to be iustly prosecuted or persecuted with the outcries of the people: for like as a good name is more pretious then

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oyntment, and to be preferd before gold or siluer: So to be iustly reproached, maligned, or cursed of the people is a thing very loathsome and worse then the losse of any worldly thing beside, as it is well noted by the holy ghost in this place. The last of al Gods iudgements against sinners, & the greatest is, *Ite maledicti*, that is, go ye cursed: that's Gods curse: from whence we may learne, how grieuous a thing the curse of man is. Euen the greatest grieuance or iniury that man can doe to man, as we may gather by the words of *Iobs* wife, who seing her husband plagued, her goods and children destroyed, bids him curse God and dye: As if she would haue sayd, spit out all thy venome or, seeing thou canst doe nothing els in the way of reuenge, curse God and die. Like vnto that of *Sampson*, who when he pluckt downe the pillar of the Temple, slewe both himselfe and the *Philistines* also. For what doth a man or a woman intend, or mean, or desire, when they curse their neighbour or aduersary, but euen the greatest mischiefe, plague, or punishment that they can deuise in the bitternes of their soules, to light vpon him or her whome they curse.

And therefore, it is recorded of the holy ghost in *Iude*, v. 9. as a caueat to all christians, to take heed of cursing others, or causing others to curse them. By the example of *Michael* the Archangell, who when he stroue about the body of *Moses*, would not blame him with cursed speaking, but only said *The Lord rebuke thee*. But happily heere some will demaund how it falleth out that the deere Saints and seruants of God do many times feele the stroak

of this ſting, I meane the curſe of the people? for anſwere whereunto, it is not ſo much to be conſidered who are curſed (for all are ſubiect to the tiranny of the tongue) (as we ſee by Chriſt himſelfe) as wherefore they are curſed: for if it be for righteouſnes, or reproouing of ſinne, it commeth not, but is a bleſſing rather, as our Sauiour ſheweth it ſaying, Mat. 5. 11. *Bleſſed are ye, when men reuile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall falſely ſay all manner of euill againſt you for my names ſake, &c.* for in this caſe, they are bleſſed of God himſelfe: but if it be for ſecret ſinnes againſt God, or for open iniuries, oppreſſions, and treſpaſſes againſt our neighbours; then let them take heed leaſt (as they ſay) God ſay Amen: for although it be heere ſaid, *The people will curſe him*, yet as it apeareth by *Dauid*, 2. *Sam.* 16. v. 10. 11. God himſelfe dooth permit and ſuffer it, it being his iuſt iudgement againſt ſuch perſons as haue ſinned againſt him. The which the Prophet *Dauid* wel conſidering, would not ſuffer *Shimei*, when he curſed him to be ſmitten, but rather ſaide, *What if God hath bidden him, it may be that God will looke vpon mine affliction, and do me good for his curſing.*

This *Moſes* maketh manifeſt in the 27. of Deu. where he denounceth euen from God himſelfe, many ſorts of people accurſed, which would not walk in the waies of the almightie, but tranſgreſſe his commaundements: as thus, *Curſed is he that curſeth father or mother: curſed is he that maketh the blinde to goe out of his way.*

This dooth Saint *Iames* alſo confirme, ſaying, that ſuch men as hourdyp their riches, garments, gold

gold or ſiluer, or with-hold the wages of the hireling euen til it ruſt or canker by them, or the moath doth fret or eat it, hauing no compaſſion on the poore that want it, are no better then accurſed with the reſt, euen of God him ſelfe, as appeareth by his words, Chap. 5. v. 1. 2. 3. ſaying, *Goe to now ye rich men, weepe and howle for the miſeries that ſhall come vpon you: your riches are corrupt, your garments are moath-eaten, your gold and ſiluer is cankered, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſſe againſt you, and ſhall eat your fleſh as it were with fire, ye haue heaped vp treaſure againſt the laſt daies.*

As if he would ſay, ye are accurſed all and euery one of you, like as they that with-draw their Corne from the poore, and keepe it in their Barnes, Rickes, or Garners, vntill it be ſo mouldie or fuſtie, that the Rats and Mice wil ſcant eat it. Therefore let them take good heed, I meane al cruel & couetous Corn-breeders, buyers, Cornemaſters, corne-mongers, cloath-maiſters, and euery other pinching penny-father, who are ſuch louers of themſelues, and ſhew ſo little pittie towards others, notwithſtanding that they ſwim in their Superfluities and aboundance of all wordly treaſures and pleaſures, do not ſo much as bring forth their corne, coyne, nor cloath, nor any thing els to releeue them that want, and ſtand in deſtres.

But haply, it may heere be ſaide, are there not many good lawes and orders made for the releeuing and keeping of the poore in euery Pariſh, and euery Pariſh hath ouer-ſeeers, to prouide them harbour and ſuſtenance? yes it is

ſo I graunt, and yet for all this, the poore lie ſtill & complaine in vaine, without both houſe-roome and food. Though the King make his ſtatute, and the Iuſtice ſend his precept, yet ſaith Chriſt, *The poore ye ſhall haue alwaies with you*, and ſo we haue, as poore as euer were, and as I ſuppoſe neuer more: and all by reaſon of ſuch with-drawers of Corn, as be now a daies many amongſt vs; who notwithſtanding the people do daily curſe them, and the Lord doth curſe them, and the deuill be ready to fetch them; yet there is no compaſſiō, pittie, nor redreſſe. But what will all theſe with-drawers of Corne, and with-holders of comfort from the poore do, when he ſhall come in place that ſhal ſay vnto them, *when I was naked ye cloathed me not, when I was hungry ye fed me not, when I was harbourleſſe ye houſed me not*, nor ſo much as vouchſafed me a nights lodging in their Barnes, &c. *Goe ye curſed into hell fire prepared for the Deuill and his angels.*

Now if God reward theſe with-drawers of Corn ſo heauily, that famiſh or ſtarue the bodies of their bretheren and ſiſters, by with-drawing or keeping from them their corporall foode, what will he do to thoſe that with-draw and with-hold from them the ſpiritual foode of their ſoules? and do not break to them the bread of life, I meane that do not preach the Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt; hauing receiued a talent that way, or holding the place of ſuch as ſhould do it? An Item to all Parſons, Vicars, Patrons, and Fermors of ſpirituall liuings, which liue by the ſweat of other mens ſoules; & yet notwithſtanding ſo muzzell vp the mouth of the Oxe that trea-

treadeth out the Corne, that where the Parſonage is many times worth two or three hundreth pounds by the yeare, the Oxe I ſay that treadeth out the Corne, that is, the Miniſter that breaketh and bringeth the foode that periſheth not, hath not aboue ten pounds or twenty markes by the yeare, and that but ſorily paid too: If this be not a with-drawing of Corne and all other neceſſaries, I can not tell what is.

O conſider this, ye that ſwallowe vp the poore, and make the needy of the land to faile. Theſe are ſuch with-drawers as ye heard of euen now, that hyre labourers to reap downe their fields and then will not pay them their wages. O King conſider: O King of Kings remember thy choſen flocke, and ſend vs ſome releefe, I meane thy choſen Iſraell from all our paine and griefe. O conſider this both prieſt and people, for where the word of God is not preached, the people periſh, not in body but in ſoule, as the apoſtle St. *Paul* proueth plainly: ſaying *How can they call on him in vvhome they haue not beleeued: hovv can they beleeue in him of whome they haue not heard? how can they heare vvithout a preacher? hovv can they preach except they be ſent?* Ro. 10. 14. And yet ſo mindefull is he of his promiſe, that once ſaid, *I am with you to the end of the world*, that now and ſtill he ſaith vnto his little flocke *Beholde I ſend vnto you Prophets, and vviſemen, and Scribes*, & what followes? thus, *and of them you ſhall kill and crucifie, and ſome of thē you ſhal ſcourge in your Sinagogues* (not with whips of cords, ſo much as with the whips of your whipping) tongues, *and of them you ſhall perſecute from Cit*

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tie to Cittie. &c. and who do all this nowadaies, but theſe with-drawers of Corn, which with-draw not onely from the market, but from the miniſter; not onely from the poore, but from the preacher, and from the church and all: may I not complaine with the Prophet *Amos* 7.8. once again & ſay; *Shall not the land tremble for this. & euery one mourn that dwell therin? and it ſhall riſe vp as a flood, and it ſhall be caſt out and drowned, as by the flood of Ægipt*, that is, deſtroyed with one iudgement or other. It followes, *But bleſſing ſhalbe vpon his head that ſelleth corne.* Hitherto ye haue heard of the curſe that commeth downe on the heads of the with-drawers either of Corn from the poore people or of mainteinance from the miniſter. Now of the bleſſing that belongeth to both or all of them, that ſell their Corne at a reaſonable rate, and in due time, or breake the bread of life, or giue competent mainteinance to the Miniſter. And firſt, whereas *Salomon* ſeemeth to vtter his ſpeeche in the ſingular number, as appeereth by the words, *Bleſſing*, and, *his head*, yet it ſhal appeere vnto you, that they include and comprehend, both a pluralitie of bleſſings, and a multiplicitie of heads, or parts both of ſoule and body: for ſuch is the wiſedome of God, that vnder the number of few words, yea & thoſe moſt commonly darke and obſcure (to the naturall man) are conteined many miſteries, much doctrine, and great knowledge: as we ſee in Chriſt his parrables, ſweet ſentences, and holy ſermons, vttered in the goſpell: and all to this end, that like as we ſay a man muſt cracke the Nut before he can eat the kirnell, ſo he would haue vs to ſtudy, pray, medi-

meditate & exerciſe our ſelues in the word of God before we can come to the depth of knowledge & vnderſtanding of his truth. This our Sauiour maketh manifeſt, in *Mat.* 13.v.11. and 13. ſaying, *To you it is giuen to know the miſteries or ſecrets of the kingdome of heauen*, q. d. To you my deſciples that followe me, and heare my voice, and doe ſeeke for the kingdome of God, *But bleſſing ſhalbe vpon his head*, or bleſſings, for God is not as man, who when he hath bleſſed one, can bleſſe no more as *Iſaac* bleſſed *Iacob*,, and after had ſcant a bleſſing for *Eſaw*, But rather as *Moſes*; who, when he had bleſſed one tribe, bleſſed an other, and neuer left vntill he had bleſſed them all. Or as Chriſt himſelfe, who when he had pronounced the poore in ſpirit bleſſed; he proceeded to the pure in hart, then to the meeke, then to the mourners, hungrie and thirſtie, mercifull, peacemakers, and patient; and pronounced them all bleſſed. Euen ſo here, though he ſpake in the ſinguler number, ſaying. Bleſſing *ſhalbe vppon the heade*: yet, he meaneth many bleſſings, or that he ſhalbe many waies bleſſed, according as he hath promiſed vnto *Iſrael*, ſaying, *If thou ſhalt obay dilligently the voice of the Lord thy God, and obſerue and do all his commandements which I haue commaunded thee this day, the Lord thy God, will ſet thee vp on high aboue all nations of the earth, and all theſe bleſſings ſhall come vpon thee: Bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the Cittie, and bleſſed in the fielde, bleſſed ſhalt thou he in the fruit of thy body, and of thy ground, bleſſed in thy cattell, and in the encreaſe of thy kine, and in the flockes of thy ſheepe &c. and bleſſed ſhalt thou be in all that thou putteſt thy hand vnto.* Deut. 28. 1. 2. 3 &c.

Thus

Thus we ſee how many waies almightie God bleſſeth all thoſe that keepe his commaundements: This the prophet *Dauid* confirmeth, ſaying, *Bleſſed is the man that conſidereth the poore and needy, the Lord ſhall deliuer him in the time of trouble. Yea, the Lord will helpe him and preſerue him aliue. He ſhalbe bleſſed vpon earth, and thou wilt not deliuer him vnto the will of his enemies. The Lord will ſtrengthen him on the bed of his ſorrowe, & make his bed in his ſickneſs.*

Now, as by this we learne, what bleſſings ſhalbe on the head, heart, and ſoule of ſuch a man, as miniſtreth comfort vnto them that be in neceſſitie. So on the other part we may gather what curſes ſhall come on ſuch as with-drawe corne, coyne, or comfort from them by any manner of meanes. For like as it is ſaid of the mercifull man, *The Lord ſhall deliuer him &c. the Lord ſhall bleſſe him on earth and not betake to the will of his enemies*: ſo contrarywiſe ſhall it befall the vnmerciful, that haue no bowels of pittie nor compaſſion in them. Let the example of holy *Iob* be our comfort in this caſe, who was a ſtaffe vnto the lame, an eye vnto the blinde, and a father vnto the fatherles, &c. All which his kindenes how the Lord requited, and what end he made, who knoweth not? Vnto this patterne of pittie, I might ad the examples of *Abraham*, *Lot*, the *Shunamite* woman, *Lidia*, *Cornelius* and the reſt, whoſe charitie, hoſpitalitie, kindenes, and comforting the needy members of Ieſus chriſt, is yet much ſpoken off & recorded in holy writ vnto this end, and for the ſame ſhall be had in an euerlaſting remembrance. Let vs therefore heerewithal looke vpon the Nauigators,

gators and Seafaring men of this world, who for the preseruation of their liues in time of tempest or danger on the Sea, doe not sticke to cast out their Corne, or whatsoeuer commoditie else they haue ballast their Ships withall, although it bee to their great detriment and losse, rather then they will loose their liues. And shall not Christian men sayling amidst the manifold tempests of this world, and the temptations of this life, in the greatest danger of their soules, vnballast their Barnes of that which lyeth behinde the doore in the Chaffe? I doe not see with what words I may better reproue their hardnes of heart, then with that verse that the Poet *Persius* made vpon the like consideration, & exclaming after this manner: *O curas in terris & inania cœlestium numen!* that is, O crooked soules vpon earth, and deuoide of heauenly things. Againe, if men would but consider with themselues, how willing and forward they are many times in purging, casting foorth and cutting off the very substantiall parts and humors of their bodies, being either infected with some incurable disease, or otherwise corrupted through ouermuch aboundance and all for the preseruation and continuance of their temporall and momentarie liues, it might [illegible] moue them, to the dispensing & laying [illegible] other inferior things, for the saluation of their soules. A man would think that so many examples of so many holy men & women, might allure [illegible] vs to change our mindes, & to set our affections on heauenly things, or else that so many commands of Christ himself would cõstraine vs to make vs friends of our vnrighteous

Mammon, or that rich and heauenly blessing which Christ shall bestow on all those that haue releeued his needy members, and comforted the comfortles, when he shall say to them, *Come ye blessed of my father and possesse the kingdome prepared for you from the beginning of the world, For when I was naked ye cloathed mee, when I was hungrie ye fed me, when I was harbourlesse yee housed me, when I was sicke and diseased ye visited and refreshed mee with Corne, coyne, cloath, and all other comforts.* And if they shall answere and say, *when sawe wee thee naked and cloathed thee, or hungry and fed thee, or sicke and visited thee.* &c. Then shall he answere them againe, and say to them,

In as much as ye haue done it to one of these little ones which haue believed in me, ye haue done it vnto me, Come ye blessed, &c.

FINIS

To the indifferent Reader.

EVen as I had finiſhed this trauell, there came vnto mee certaine perſons of the Countie and confines where I dwelled, with a written Paper in their hands, ſignifying therein what paines and coſt they had vndertaken, and what troubles they had endured in ſeeking to redeſſe, or at the leaſt to reſtraine the Tranſportation of Corne, and all other victualls, (fruite only except) from the Townes of *Bewdley*, *Tewxburie*, and the Cities of *Worceſter* and *Gloceſter*, vnto *Briſtowe*, &c. wherein alſo it appeared, that by the good meanes & care of ſome of the higher powers; they had obtained Letters of commannd to the Iuſtices of Peace within the countie of *Gloceſter*, to appoint certaine honeſt and

ſubſtantiall men to be ſearchers of all ſuch boates or veſſels as ſhould paſſe on the riuer of Seauerne, frō any of the foreſaid places to another place, by which good means it hath pleaſed God ſomewhat to mittigate the dayly encreaſing price of corn & graine amongſt vs.

But for as much as it was giuen mee, to vnderſtand at the ſame time, by thoſe parties that came to ſollicit this cauſe; that the moſt part of thoſe perſons ſo appointed by the Iuſtices to be ſearchers, were very wealthy men; that is to ſay either great Corne-maiſters, or cloathiers, & therfore for their owne parts, had no greate cauſe to indure the paines, which was needeful in this buſines to bee taken; & the reſt of thē being of meaner condition & ſtate, and therfore not ſo wel able to beare the daily charges about this employment (as beeing more deſirous to haue it better effected, then the reſt) craued the Aſsiſtance of the Pariſhes and Towne-ſhippes adioyning, by ſome beneuolent collection, for the ſuppliing of their expences, promiſing with all, a more diligent and dayly attendance vppon

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the ſaid ſearch. The which their ſo honeſt, needfull, and neceſſarie a Petition, I not only preſentlye tendered to make knowne; but alſo for the better continuance therof, I thought good to giue ſome intelligence heerein, that euerie good Chriſtian, that either regardeth the crie of the poore, or the loue of his Neighbour, may put to his helping hand, to ſo good and charitable an action. Wherefore now in as much as it hath pleaſed God by the Doctrine of his word to giue vs the true knowledge and vnderſtanding of the verie originall cauſe of this preſent dearth, and both opened and offered vnto vs the meanes to preuent and take away the ſame; Let vs not be ſlacke to ioyne both heart and hand, purſe and prayer, minde & money for the ſpeedy redreſsing of this euill, ſo iuſtly impoſed and laide vpon vs, for ſuch cauſes as haue bene by vs committed.

God graunt that wee bee not receiuers of the grace of God in vaine, nor turne his gace into Wantonneſſe, leaſt while we ſay peace, peace, the Lord of Hoſtes come

againſt

against vs with his great Armie, the sound of a Trumpet, voice of an Arch-angell, consuming fire, and such like.

FINIS.